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ABSTRACT

This packet contains 10 selected papers on writing centers in both secondary and post-secondary settings: "Keynote Address: Collaboration, Control, and the Idea of a Writing Center" (Andrea A. Lunsford); "Diversifying for Disabilities: Making Writing a Mode of Encouragement" (Laurie Bertamus); "When Cultures Collide: The Effects of Hidden Taboos and Cultural Orientation on Students, Tutors, and Administrators" (Kathleen Cahill); "Conference Groups in the Writing Center: Shared Resources" (Richard Carr and others); "Wendy, The Potato Head Kids, and Me: Dealing With Sexist Representations in Language, or Un-Wrapping the Hamburger" (Michael Dickel); "Reattainment of Writing Expertise of Adult Reentering College Students" (F. David Gilman and others); "Contrastive Rhetoric and Tutoring ESL Writers" (James H. Robinson and others); "How Different Writer-Respondent Relationships Affect Collaboration" (Carol Severino); "Tutoring Writing from the Psychiatrist's Couch" (Elizabeth A. Spaeth and others); and "Establishing a High School Writing Lab" (Anne Wright). (PRA)

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Centers for Collaboration

Diversity for the New Decade

Midwest Writing Centers
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Selected Proceedings

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These proceedings were compiled and edited by Dave Healy with the assistance of Jeff Mitchell.

Collaboration, Control, and The Idea of a Writing Center

Andrea A. Lunsford

The triple focus of my title reflects some problems I've been concentrating on as I've thought about and prepared for the opportunity to speak at the Midwest Writing Centers Association meeting in St. Cloud. I'll try as I go along to illuminate—or at least to complicate—each of these foci, and I'll conclude by sketching in what I see as a particularly compelling idea of a writing center, one informed by collaboration and, I hope, attuned to diversity.

As some of you may know, I've recently written a book on collaboration, in collaboration with my dearest friend and coauthor Lisa Ede. *Singular Texts/Plural Authors: Perspectives in Collaborative Writing* was six years in the research and writing, so I would naturally gravitate to principles of collaboration in this or any other address.

Yet it's interesting to me to note that when Lisa and I began our research (see "Why Write . . . Together?"), we didn't even use the term "collaboration"; we identified our subjects as "co- and group- writing." And when we presented our first paper on the subject at the 1985 CCCC meeting, ours was the only such paper at the conference, ours the only presentation with "collaboration" in the title. Now, as you know, the word is everywhere, in every journal, every conference program, on the tip of every scholarly tongue. So—collaboration, yes. But why control? Because as the latest pedagogical bandwagon, collaboration often masquerades as democracy when it in fact practices the same old authoritarian control. It thus stands open to abuse and can, in fact, lead to poor teaching and poor learning. And it can lead—as many of you know—to disastrous results in the writing center. So amidst the rush to embrace collaboration, I see a need for careful interrogation and some caution.

We might begin by asking where the collaboration bandwagon got rolling? Why has it gathered such steam? Because, I believe, collaboration both in theory and practice reflects a broad-based epistemological shift, a shift in the way we view knowledge. This shift involves a move from viewing knowledge and reality as things exterior to or outside of us, as immediately accessible, individually knowable, measurable, and shareable—to viewing knowledge and reality as mediated by or constructed through language in social use, as socially constructed, contextualized, as, in short, the produce of collaboration.

I'd like to suggest that collaboration as an embodiment of this theory of knowledge poses a distinct threat to one particular idea of a writing center. This idea of a writing center, what I'll call "The Center as Storehouse," holds to the earlier view of knowledge just described—knowledge as exterior to us and as directly accessible. The Center as Storehouse operates as information stations or storehouses, prescribing and handing out skills and strategies to individual learners. They often use "modules" or other kinds of individualized learning materials. They tend to view knowledge as individually derived and held, and they are not particularly amenable to collaboration, sometimes actively hostile to it. I visit lots of Storehouse Centers, and in fact I set up such a center myself, shortly after I had finished an MA degree and a thesis on William Faulkner.

Since Storehouse Centers do a lot of good work and since I worked very hard to set up one of them, I was loathe to complicate or critique such a center. Even after Lisa and I started studying collaboration in earnest, and in spite of the avalanche of data we gathered in support of the premise that collaboration is the norm in most professions (ACEC, AIC, APA, MCA, PSMA, ICMA, STC), I was still a very reluctant convert.

Why? Because, I believe, collaboration posed another threat to my way of teaching, a way that informs another idea of a writing center, which I'll call "The Center as Garret." Garret Centers are informed by a deep-seated belief in individual "genius," in the Romantic sense of the term. (I need hardly point out that this belief also informs much of the Humanities and in particular English Studies.) These centers are also informed by a deep-seated attachment to the American brand of individualism, a term coined by Alexis de Toqueville as he sought to describe the defining characteristics of this Republic.

Unlike Storehouse Centers, Garret Centers don't view knowledge as exterior, as information to be sought out or passed on mechanically. Rather they see knowledge as interior, as inside the student, and the writing center's job as helping students get in touch with this knowledge, as a way to find their unique voices, their individual and unique powers. This idea has been articulated by many, including Ken Macrorie, Peter Elbow, and Don Murray, and the idea usually gets acted out in Murray-like conferences, those in which the tutor or teacher listens, voices encouragement, and essentially serves as a validation of the students' "I-search." Obviously, collaboration problematizes Garret Centers as well, for they also view knowledge as interiorized, solitary, individually derived, individually held.

As I've indicated, I held on pretty fiercely to this idea as well as to the first one. I was still resistant to collaboration. So I took the natural path for an academic faced with this dilemma: I decided to do more research. I did a lot of it. And to my chagrin, I found more and more evidence to challenge my ideas, to challenge both the idea of Centers as Storehouses or as Garrets. Not incidentally, the data I amassed mirrored what my students had been telling me for years: not the research they carried out, not their dogged writing of essays, not me even, but their work in groups, their collaboration, was the most important and helpful part of their school experience. Briefly, the data I found all support the following claims:

1. Collaboration aids in problem finding as well as problem solving (stop to discuss labor—three things students can't do: problem finding, working with others, building conclusions on data drawn from multiple sources).
2. Collaboration aids in learning abstractions.
3. Collaboration aids in transfer and assimilation, it fosters interdisciplinary thinking.
4. Collaboration leads not only to sharper, more critical thinking (students must explain, defend, adapt), but to deeper understanding of OTHERS.
5. Collaboration leads to higher achievement in general. (I might mention here the Johnson and Johnson analysis of 122 studies from 1924-1981, which included every North American study that considered achievement or performance data in competitive, cooperative/ collaborative, or individualistic classrooms. Some 60% showed that collaboration promoted higher achievement, while only 6% showed the reverse. Among studies comparing the effects of collaboration and independent work, the results are even more strongly in favor of collaboration. Moreover, the superiority of collaboration held for all subject areas and all age groups. See "How to Succeed Without Even Vying," *Psychology Today,* September 1986.)
6. Collaboration promotes excellence—In this regard, I am fond of quoting Hannah Arendt: "For excellence, the presence of others is always required." Collaboration engages the whole student and encourages active learning; it combines reading, talking, writing,

thinking; it provides practice in both synthetic and analytic skills.

Given these research findings, why am I still urging caution in using collaboration as our key term, in using collaboration as the idea of the kind of writing center I now advocate?

First, because creating a collaborative environment and truly collaborative tasks is damnably difficult. Collaborative environments and tasks must demand collaboration. Students, tutors, teachers must really need one another to carry out common goals. As an aside, let me note that studies of collaboration in the workplace identify three kinds of tasks that seem to call consistently for collaboration: high-order problem defining and solving; division of labor tasks, in which the job is simply too big for any one person; and division of expertise tasks. Such tasks are often difficult to come by in writing centers, particularly those based on the Storehouse or Garret models.

A collaborative environment must also be one in which goals are clearly defined and in which the jobs at hand engage everyone fairly equally, from the student clients to work-study students to peer tutors and professional staff. In other words, such an environment rejects traditional hierarchies. In addition, the kind of collaborative environment I want to encourage calls for careful and ongoing monitoring and evaluating of the collaboration or group process, again on the part of all involved. In practice, such monitoring calls on each person involved in the collaboration to build a theory of collaboration, a theory of group dynamics.

Building such a collaborative environment is also hard because getting groups of any kind going is hard. The students', tutors', and teachers' prior experiences may work against it (they probably held or still hold to Storehouse or Garret ideas); the school day and term work against it; and the drop-in nature of many centers, including my own, works against it. Against these odds, we have to figure out how to constitute groups in our centers; how to allow for evaluation and monitoring; how to teach, model, and learn about careful listening, leadership, goal setting, and negotiation—all of which are necessary to effective collaboration.

We must also recognize that collaboration is hardly a monolith. Instead, it comes in a dizzying variety of modes about which we know almost nothing. In our books, Lisa and I identify and describe two such modes, the hierarchical and the dialogic, both of which our centers need to be well versed at using. But it stands to reason that these two modes perch only at the tip of the collaborative iceberg.

As I argued earlier, I think we must be cautious in rushing to embrace collaboration, because collaboration can also be used to reproduce the status quo; the rigid hierarchy of teacher-centered classrooms is replicated in the tutor-centered writing center in which the tutor is still the seat of all authority but is simply pretending it isn't so. Such a pretense of democracy sends badly mixed messages. It can also lead to the kind of homogeneity that squelches diversity, that waters down ideas to the lowest common denominator, that erases rather than values difference. This tendency is particularly troubling given our growing awareness of the roles gender and ethnicity play in all learning. So regression toward the mean is not a goal I seek in an idea of a writing center based on collaboration.

The issue of control surfaces most powerfully in this concern over a collaborative center. In the writing center ideas I put forward earlier, where is that focus of control? In Storehouse Centers, it seems to me control resides in the tutor or center staff, the possessors of information, the currency of the academy. Garret Centers, on the other hand, seem to invest power and control in the individual student knower, though I would argue that such control is often appropriated by the tutor/teacher, as I have often seen happen during Murray or Elbow style conferences. Any center based on collaboration will need to address the issue of control explicitly, and doing so will not be easy. It won't be easy because what I think of as successful collaboration (which I'll call Burkean Parlor Centers), collaboration that is attuned to diversity, goes deeply against the grain of education in America. To illustrate, I need offer only a few representative examples:

1. Mina Shaughnessy, welcoming a supervisor to her classroom in which students were busily collaborating, was told "Oh . . . I'll come back when you're teaching."
2. A prominent and very distinguished feminist scholar has been refused an endowed chair because most of her work has been written collaboratively.
3. A prestigious college poetry prize was withdrawn after the winning poem turned out to be written by three student collaborators.
4. A faculty member working in a writing center was threatened with dismissal for "encouraging" group-produced documents.

I have a number of such examples, all of which suggest that—used unreflectively or uncautiously—collaboration may harm professionally those who seek to use it and may as a result further reify a model of education as the top down transfer of information (back to The Storehouse) or a private search for Truth (back to The Garret). As I also hope I've suggested, collaboration can easily degenerate into busy work or what Jim Corder calls "fading into the tribe."

So I am very, very serious about the cautions I've been raising, about our need to examine carefully what we mean by collaboration and to explore how those definitions locate control. And yet I still advocate—with growing and deepening conviction—the move to collaboration in both classrooms and centers. In short, I am advocating a third, alternative idea of a writing center, one I know many of you have already brought into being. In spite of the very real risks involved, we need to embrace the idea of writing centers as Burkean Parlors, as centers for collaboration. Only in doing so can we, I believe, enable a student body and a citizenry to meet the demands of the twenty-first century. A recent Labor Department report tells us, for instance, that by the mid I990s workers will need to read at the 11th-grade level for even low-paying jobs; that workers will need to be able not so much to solve prepackaged problems but to identify problems amidst a welter of information or data; that they will need to reason from complex symbol systems rather than from simple observations; most of all that they will need to be able to work with others who are different from them and to learn to negotiate power and control.

The idea of a center I want to advocate speaks directly to these needs, for its theory of knowledge is based not on positivistic principles (that's The Storehouse again), not on Platonic or absolutist ideals (that's The Garret), but on the notion of knowledge as always contextually bound, as always socially constructed. Such a center might well have as its motto Arendt's statement: "For excellence, the presence of others is always required." Such a center would place control, power, and authority not in the tutor or staff, not in the individual student, but in the negotiating group. It would engage students not only in solving problems set by teachers but in identifying problems for themselves; not only in working as a group but in monitoring, evaluating, and building a theory of how groups work; not only in understanding and valuing collaboration but in confronting squarely the issues of control that successful collaboration inevitably raises; not only in reaching consensus but in valuing dissensus and diversity.

The idea of a center informed by a theory of knowledge as socially constructed, of power and control as constantly negotiated and shared, and as collaboration as its first principle presents quite a challenge. It challenges our way of organizing our center, of training our staff and tutors, and of working with teachers. It even challenges our sense of where we "fit" into this idea. More importantly, however, such a center presents a challenge to the institution of higher education, an institution that insists on rigidly controlled individual performance, on evaluation as punishment, on isolation, on the kind kinds of values that took that poetry prize away from three young people or that accused Mina Shaughnessy of "not teaching."

This alternative, this third idea of a writing center, poses a threat as well as a challenge to the status quo of higher education. This threat is one powerful and largely invisible reason, I would argue, for the way in which many writing centers have been consistently marginalized, consistantly silenced. But organizations like this one are gaining a voice, are finding ways to imagine into being centers as Burkean Parlors for Collaboration, writing centers, I believe, which can lead the way in changing the face of higher education.

So, as if you don't already know it, you're a subversive group, and I'm delighted to have been invited to participate in this collaboration. But I've been talking far too long by myself now, so I'd like to close by giving the floor to two of my student collaborators. The first—like I was—was a reluctant convert to the kind of collaboration I've been describing tonight. But here's what she wrote to me some time ago:

> Dr. Lunsford: I don't know exactly what to say here, but I want to say something. So here goes. When this Writing Center class first began, I didn't know what in the hell you meant by collaboration. I thought—hey!

> yo!—you're the teacher and you know a lot of stuff. And you better tell it to me. Then I can tell it to the other guys. Now I know that you know even more than I thought. I even found out I know a lot. But that's not important. What's important is knowing that knowing doesn't just happen all by itself, like the cartoons show with a little light bulb going off in a bubble over a character's head. Knowing happens with other people, figuring things out, trying to explain, talking through things. What I know is that we are all making and remaking our knowing and our selves with each other every day—you just as much as me and the other guys, Dr. Lunsford. We're all—all of us together—collaborative recreations in process. So—well—just wish me luck.

And here's a note I received just as I got on the plane, from another student/collaborator:

> I had believed that Ohio State had nothing more to offer me in the way of improving my writing. Happily, I was mistaken. I have great expectations for our Writing Center Seminar class. I look forward to every one of our classes and to every session with my 110W students [2 groups of 3 undergraduates he is tutoring]. I sometimes feel that they have more to offer me than I to them. They say the same thing, though, so I guess we're about even, all learning together. [P.S. This class and the Center have made me certain I want to attend graduate school.]

These students embody the kind of center I'm advocating, and I'm honored to join them in conversation about it, conversation we can continue together now.

Diversifying for Disabilities: Making Writing a Mode of Encouragement

Laurie Bertamus
St. Cloud State University

When I was in School the harst thing for Me to do was to Wright theane the reason is that the spelling is so poor and every tine I had to turned in a class theane is was Just a night Meare for me When you are pased arond in school and no teacher realy cares if you are realy Doing the Job or not the only thing they realy Care about is getting you through the class Just Becouse

Okay, what are you thinking right now? Did many of you plan to sit down with this and read a well-polished essay (or at least a valiant attempt at it), much like you do when you sit down to read writing assignments? And were you rather perplexed to find that this beginning wasn't what you expected and curious as to why? Lazy author? (Careful, that's me.) Actually, this is a writing sample I found in Carolyn O'Hearn's essay, "Recognizing the Learning Disabled College Writer." It was written by a 22-year-old learning disabled student, and I hope it demonstrates how instructors and tutors need to be ready for a surprise like this each time they assign or read an essay. I hope, too, it demonstrates just how difficult it is for some learning disabled students to communicate through writing and how we need to be careful not to misdiagnose their efforts.

As an avid fan of the effectiveness of writing across the curriculum (WAC), it is difficult for me to turn around and, in almost the same click-click of my keyboard, tell you about how writing, the mode of learning, is writing, the mode of discouragement, for many of the increasing number of learning disabled students on our campuses. For example, the in-class essay test, a popular WAC strategy, puts many learning disabled students in a very vulnerable spot.

As O'Hearn reports, "not only must [learning disabled students] write—a much hated task and justifiably so, since for years writing has been a source of frustration and humiliation—but the writing must be done quickly" (296). The incredible irony of this, moreover, is that even though writing is a most difficult, if not the most difficult, way of communicating for many learning disabled students, very little has been written about learning disabled college writers and how to help them (O'Hearn 295). These discouraging problems raise a disturbing question in any classroom or writing center where writing is, or has the potential to become, an intricate part of learning. Should we continue to encourage writing in classrooms since it appears to put some students at risk, especially when these students are already at risk?

Even with a current shortage of research on this topic, if we assume that writing is an important way to reinforce learning or even to learn in the first place, the answer to this question is "yes" for two very important reasons. First of all, the simple accommodations instructors and tutors may make in their teaching strategies to enable learning disabled students to gain the advantages of writing may benefit all students they work with as well.

Secondly, if students choose not to tell about their disabilities or do not know about the disabilities in the first place, evaluating their writing over several tasks may perhaps help us, and them, begin to figure out the reason behind some troubling learning difficulties. Of course, most instructors and tutors are not qualified to diagnose a learning disability, but we can look for characteristics that may hint at one, and these characteristics most often show up in writing.

Most, if not all, of the research I consulted with agreed on one thing: although official definitions of learning disabilities exist, these definitions and how to apply them are highly debatable topics, especially among scholars (Franke 172). The December 29, 1977 Federal Register defines specific learning disabilities as follows:

> Specific learning disabilities means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations. The term includes such conditions as perceptual handicaps, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. The term does not include children who have learning problems which are primarily the result of visual, hearing or motor handicaps, of mental retardation, of emotional disturbance, or environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.

Whew. Such a definition, while complete, did not give me the information I was looking for to help me create more positive learning for learning disabled students. Even specific definitions of certain learning disabilities, such as dyslexia, are numerous enough to cause confusion and misuse of terms. For example, Pat Potter, director of St. Cloud State's Handicapped Student Services, cautions that dyslexia has become a "a word used too loosely" by people to explain problems it has nothing to do with.

The World Federation of Neurology definition of dyslexia is the most widely accepted, and it reads, "[Dyslexia is] a disorder manifested by difficulty in learning to read despite conventional instruction, adequate intelligence, and sociocultural opportunity. It is dependent upon fundamental cognitive disabilities which are frequently of constitutional origin" (Taylor 8). However, as Thomas L. Franke reports, there are two different types of dyslexia—developmental, which is the type mentioned in the above definition, and acquired, which results from brain injury—and there are six syndromes for each type, resulting in twelve actual varieties of dyslexia. Plus, dyslexia is often used as a synonym for dysgraphia, which is a learning disability that refers to problems in writing (Franke 172). Whew, again.

Understandably, many educators may feel confused and frustrated about dyslexia and other learning disabilities. We can only hope this frustration does not lead to the type of ignorance Alice B. Adams writes of in her essay, "Dyslexia: Hidden Handicap in the Classroom." Adams asked her fellow college faculty to define dyslexia for her, and some responded, in all seriousness, with definitions such as "a form of retardation" or "something football players have" (259). Eeek.

While complicated definitions and loose labeling may hinder our efforts to get a complete understanding of learning disabilities, we cannot get discouraged. Franke suggests that we may just need to finally "acknowledge the controversy surrounding the condition and recognize the complexity of diagnosis" (175). Though Franke was specifically speaking of dyslexia when he made this statement, his message can be applied to learning disabilities as a whole. It is okay, perhaps, for us to be a bit muddled when it comes to definitions and diagnosis; we just need to be focused when it comes to helping learning disabled students learn to help themselves, especially when it comes to writing.

We also need to not only recognize the complexity of diagnosis, but we need to respect it as well. Pat Potter reminds us that most teachers and tutors are not in a position to define or diagnose learning disabilities, especially from only a few pieces of student writing. Diagnosis may not be our responsibility, and often we do not have the background or time to do it. While we can familiarize ourselves with writing characteristics that may describe learning disabilities, we can only tactfully suggest that students seek official diagnosis.

This puts us in a tough spot; although we are not in the position to diagnose, we are in the unfortunate position to misdiagnose these students whose use of "the conventions of writing is unconventional to the point of being bizarre" (O'Hearn 296). We may see an essay filled with errors from a learning disabled student and unknowingly think the student is lazy (did not care to proofread), does not belong in college (has a lower level of vocabulary), or is not intelligent (has spelling and other sentence level errors) (O'Hearn 297). Think back: what types of diagnosis or misdiagnosis were made at the beginning of this essay?

By avoiding discouraging misdiagnosis, we can contribute to the success of learning disabled college writers. David Taylor, in "Identifying and Helping the Dyslexic Writer," makes clear that students with learning disabilities need to understand and know that others understand that their problems are not the result of their being lazy, stupid, or simply "bad" (9). Unfortunately, there is no thorough and dependable list of characteristic writing errors that both signals "learning disability" and discounts laziness and/or lack of preparation. In fact, we do not need one if students tell us about their disabilities or if their difficulties have been officially documented.

However, if we find students with "unconventional writing" over several tasks and can find no explanation as to why, we can consult O'Hearn's beginning list of characteristic writing errors that suggest students may have learning disabilities (Appendix A). Her list also includes examples of errors that are considered learning disabled (LD) and non-learning disabled (Non-LD). Mary Kay Galotto also offers a list that describes characteristics found in the writing of learning disabled students (Appendix B).

We must keep in mind, however, that much more research needs to be done in this area and that learning disabled writers, just like all writers, may have very different characteristics and errors that are unique to their own writing. In addition, at least two areas on the list are considered only fairly reliable. First of all, research is beginning to question the use of transposed letters as a signal for learning disabilities (Franke 172). Secondly, omitted letters and word endings are the least reliable of the spelling errors because many speakers of English dialects and students of English as a second language omit these endings as well.

The most discouraging problem learning disabled students may have when it comes to writing, however, may be a lack of confidence. This is another important reason why writing should be encouraged. While practice may never make perfect for these students, experience may bring the confidence they need to take on writing in the real world. As David Taylor explains, learning disabled students "work in unusual ways, and they need unique types of instruction" in order to succeed at the college level (9). There are still many questions concerning what exactly all of these unique types of instruction are, but the essays I studied seem to consistently suggest many of the same starting points.

First of all, teachers and tutors should try to encourage student independence from square one. This includes remembering that students who are aware they have a disability are responsible for informing their teachers and tutors. We can then refer students to helpful campus services, but we should let them contact these places themselves. Students need to know that people on campus are willing to accommodate any special requests they may have, but they also need to know how to get this help independently.

Secondly, small accommodations in teaching and tutoring strategies may need to be made. For example, we may want to try presenting information in more than one way, such as talking about a concept while presenting a visual map about it. This gives learning disabled students (and others) the opportunity to understand the idea twice, and the map gives students the step-by-step strategy they may need for writing their essays (Adams 262).[1]

Of course, with the extra help disabled students are entitled to, the inevitable question of how much help is too much help comes up. Do we make allowances for learning disabled students or do we measure each person's work by the same yard stick? (Adams 259). Does the right to individualized instruction mean the right to individualized grading standards? (Franke 175). Do we proofread more freely?

There are many more questions that still need to be answered about the best ways to help learning disabled college writers. I apologize that I don't even have most of the answers here, but I hope that many of you will make it a priority to learn more. For now, though, until more information becomes available to us, the best thing we can probably do for learning disabled students is believe in their efforts and help them believe in themselves. The conclusion of the writing sample I used at the beginning of this essay expresses the anguish these students sometimes feel:

> the Way to spot this kind of Person is not two hard When you see sone one who is haveing truble in Class but not with the work he takes home.
>
> When you get out of highschool and you DON'T KNOW WITCH IS RIGHT or WRIGHT or How To Yue TO TWO TOO WHAT is the truble. . .
>
> Most people like me are Crying out for help But No on is willing to listen

Many of us may feel underqualified when it comes to working with learning disabled students, but the main qualification expressed by this student, listening, is something we all can easily become experts at. And, although we cannot cure students of their learning disabilities, we can give them confidence by encouraging them to take yet another route toward independence—writing.

Note

[1] For a more complete list of suggestions for working with learning disabled students, as well as those with visual and hearing impairments, please see Appendix C and Appendix D at the end of this essay.

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Appendix A

Characteristic Writing Errors that May Signal a Learning Disability

Adapted from: Carolyn O'Hearn's "Recognizing the Learning Disabled College Writer." College English 51 (1989): 294-304.

Number of Errors:
- so high that it will often interfere with comprehension
- as frequent as every other word

Nature of Errors:

-Spelling

- homonyms or near homonyms such as:

LD	Non-LD
as, has	it's, its
use, you	there, their
which, witch	complement, compliment

- transposed letters:

LD	Non-LD
does, dose	receive, recieve
because, becuase	belief, beleif

- omitted letters and word endings

-Punctuation

- total absence in writing
- odd placement, such as a semicolon alone at the beginning of a line

-Capitalization

- placement in the middle of words, such as proBaBly
- writing in all block letters

Appendix B

Some Characteristics of the Written Expression of Learning Disabled Students

(adapted from Mary Kay Galotto, Montgomery College,
Diagnostic/Prescriptive Learning Specialist)

1. **Handwriting**

Often the student's writing looks childish. Letters may be poorly formed; the writing may sprawl unevenly across the page; letters are poorly or incorrectly formed; crude block letter printing frequently may be seen.

2. **Spelling**

Spelling errors may be gross, demonstrating little resemblance between the sight and sound of the word. Basic sight words may be misspelled, such as "which," "every," "for," or "they," while more difficult words are produced correctly. Reversals of letters within a word may occur. Letter may be arbitrarily repeated. Endings may be omitted. There will be a consistent lack of consistency.

Common spelling errors	Characteristic LD spelling errors
reverance for reverence	equiment for equipment
grammer for grammar	facecion for physician
museam for museum	presuse for precious

3. **Choice of topic**

Learning disabled students often pick concrete, simple topics. A narrative is usually the simplest to handle because an experience is already structured chronologically. Although they may have little difficulty discussing more abstract topics, they may not be able to organize their thoughts easily to set down on paper.

4. **Organization**

Discourse is frequently disconnected, with little logical transition from one point to another. Word choice is poor. For example, "For instance, one who cannot hear or one who cannot see as readily as a 'normal' individual is stricken with the inability to perform just a normal individual in today's society."

5. **Vocabulary**

Written vocabulary may not match oral vocabulary. Students often are very aware of their spelling deficiencies, and they will limit their expression severely rather than risk misspelling.

6. Mechanics

LD students have the predictable mechanical errors that any student might demonstrate. Usually it is a question of degree of difficulty. Besides sentence fragments, mistaken pronoun reference, run-on sentences, misplaced modifiers, etc., the LD student may randomly sprinkle capital letters throughout a paragraph, misuse standard end punctuation, and use various homonyms creatively—"sun" for "son," "two" for "too" or "to," "toed" for "towed," etc.

7. Appearance of the paper

Besides the specific items mentioned above, papers of LD students frequently look immature. There are many cross-outs, write-overs, and erasers. This is different from an edited paper, where corrections and additions are being made. The appearance of the LD student's paper may signal a person having word-to-word difficulty.

Appendix C

Strategies for Helping Learning Disabled Students

From the Midwest Writing Centers Conference workshop,
"Diversifying for Disabilities: Some Successful
Tutoring Strategies," by Laurie Bertamus

1. Try to make trust your number one priority. Sincerity and honest effort on a tutor's part can more than make up for inexperience in working with learning disabled students make students comfortable; share your weaknesses with them.

2. Try to be generous with your time and patience. Often these students work better when they have enough time; the pressure of a fast moving half hour session may only add to their frustration.
    - •Go for an hour at a time, maybe even two, and just keep an eye on how the student is responding.
    - •Set goals that are realistic and focus on one thing at a time. **However**, if the paper is due, work through it sentence by sentence, word by word, if you need to.

3. Try to make work in a tutorial directly applicable to students' assignments.
    - •No "dead-end" worksheets that only add to troubles.
    - •Start with explicit examples and work to vague rules and theories.

4. Proofread and teach at the same time.
    - •Circle mistakes, but don't correct them. Ask students to look up a misspelled word and then have them write it out to get the feel of it.
    - •Teach resources (dictionary, thesaurus, etc.) as you go.
    - •Read papers out loud, including the punctuation.
    - •Let students dictate to you to get their ideas going.

5. Partially cover worksheets or papers with a notecard to cut down on visual stimuli.

6. Try to move to a computer as quickly as possible.

7. Try to present concepts in more than one way.
    - •Color code errors and/or things done well.
    - •Use concept maps to organize thoughts.
    - •Make things as concrete as possible.

8. Try to keep students responsible for their own communication with teachers and/or other campus services. You may need to be a facilitator, but remember, the goal is independence.

Appendix D

Additional Strategies for Helping Visually Impaired Students

Cheryl Hofstetter Towns
Fort Hays State University, Hays, KS

1. One possible way to determine the extent of impairment is to ask the student if he or she reads large print or braille. (Be aware, though, that not all blind students read braille.)

2. Speak to a blind student soon after he or she enters the room since your voice will be that student's primary orientation to you. (And remember, there's no need to speak louder than usual; blind does not mean deaf!)

3. You can guide a student verbally by saying, "The chair is just in front of you to your right." If you wish to guide the student any distance, first ask, "May I guide you?" and then offer your elbow for him or her to hold onto. Note that you don't grab onto the student's elbow to do the directing.

4. If the student has a seeing-eye dog, don't treat it as a pet. That is, avoid the temptation to pet it, talk to it, or feed it. The dog needs to remain alert to its duty as a guide.

5. Foster independence whenever possible. For example, if other students get out their own files when they come in to work, provide that same responsibility for a blind student by labeling that folder tactually—perhaps with a regular or braille label-maker. And don't rearrange the furniture in the lab—at least not without making a point to orient a visually impaired student to the new arrangement. Also, is your center identified at the doorway with tactile letters and/or numbers?

6. Don't be paranoid about slipping and saying something like "Do you see what I mean?" A blind person recognizes that the word "see" can mean "understand."

7. Equipment to consider:
    - tape recorders
    - braille label-maker
    - voice synthesizer for computer
    - print enlarger
    - magnifying glass or sheet
    - large-type ball for electric typewriter
    - large-print computer monitor

8. In a classroom setting, encourage the partially sighted student to sit at the front. Provide a photocopy of any transparency you use so that the student can follow a close-up version.

9. Photocopy handouts using the "enlarge" function of a copier, if available.
10. The writing center may want to label tactually the keys of a typewriter or computer keyboard. A tutor may then need to serve as an "oral reader" to facilitate revision.

Additional Strategies for Helping Hearing Impaired Students

Adapted from Cheryl Hofstetter Towns
Fort Hays State University, Hays, KS

1. Allow for an interpreter if necessary—but talk directly to the student, not the interpreter, even if the student watches the interpreter. The student will look back to you when s/he respond.
2. Always get the student's attention first and face that student when speaking; don't talk into the chalkboard or into a paper you're reading.
3. Speak naturally without overenunciating.
4. Avoid bright lights behind you as you speak; the glare interferes with lip reading.
5. Students can get class notes by having another student take notes on NCR duplicating paper. (We got our supply from a local newspaper office.)
6. Entering messages to each other on the computer screen might be faster than writing them out (if no interpreter is available).
7. Perhaps at least one tutor in the center could take a sign language class to facilitate basic communication.
8. Some deaf students may have guide dogs. Don't treat it as a pet. That is, avoid the temptation to pet it, talk to it, or feed it. The dog needs to remain alert to its duty as a guide.

When Cultures Collide: The Effects of Hidden Taboos and Cultural Orientation on Students, Tutors, and Administrators

Kathleen Cahill
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Culture assumes diversity within a community. This diversity manifests itself in unique experiences and expressions in speech, behavior, and writing, encouraging participants to become members of a dominant group. Presented as neutral, participation in this group is seen as success; once inside the group, jeopardy is seen as outside. Problems arise, however, when members of this "group" introduce diversity, when schemata collide. Diversity, after all, includes all models within a community, both appropriate and inappropriate ones.

If conflicts do occur, and they do, it is natural for these collisions to be found in the writing. At the same time, collaborative tutors in writing centers must negotiate this diversity, creating a "transition zone," a place where differences surface and are integrated. Tutors must work with the reality of belonging, with "real" conflicts in schemata, in what we "know," the sometimes invisible, inappropriate models that exist within this diversity. But how do tutors negotiate diversity in the schemata they encounter?

Schemata, for this discussion, can be defined as "knowing" what, how, why, where and when to do, think, act, or react based on experience in, learning from, and constraints of one's family, society, and culture. Schemata tell me what I can say and what I can't; they tell me when to get upset and why. They tell me what is polite, what is good, what is bad, and even where to stand. They tell me how to say "hello" and "goodbye," how long to wait for a response, and what assumptions to have about ideas and things. Schemata are the invisible frames of time, meaning, and space, and are most generally what a writer or speaker brings to any situation. For example, when you read the following passage, think carefully about the steps, the order you must follow to complete the process. When you have finished the passage, recall as much detail as you can. This passage is from the introduction to a book on how to make bread:

> *First, you need proper tools. Sometimes you need to search far and wide to procure the proper tools needed to create the best possible product. You also need an oven big enough to hold several pots and dishes at once, but careful attention must be paid to the process. For example, kneading requires strength, skill, dexterity, but most importantly, it requires patience. Your patience will be rewarded, however, with an aesthetically pleasing product.*
>
> Adapted from a classroom exercise

Without looking, take a moment to write a short paragraph about the passage. Try to recall as much detail as you can, touching on all the important points. Once you have finished this assignment, continue reading.

If you are like most writers, you recall most of what is said. You probably added description about bread making from your own experience. As you compare your paragraph to the passage, you might find that you are quite accurate, having added the needed detail to help recall. The problem is that this passage is about making clay pots. It has nothing to do with bread.

Content schemata like this example predict meaning and behavior. Once the topic is given, the content becomes meaningful. Internal clues provide the necessary information, but another kind of schemata is more difficult to explain. This schemata is more formal and ritualized and is organized based on external kinds of "knowing." For example, in the following passage, a certain cultural celebration is taking place. Try to identify what the celebration is and to determine the meaning of the content and activities. For someone from this culture, all the necessary clues are contained in the passage:

> *The kitchen was buzzing with activity as a large and fancy dinner was being prepared. Flowers were everywhere. This day was more important than George's birthday. Each year his family held an open house in his honor. Guests brought wine and baked goodies. George was greeted with hugs and kisses. This was a day for celebrating. George was so happy. He could not miss the chance to join in and show his skill. He rushed to the front of the line, pulled out his hankerchief, and placed a glass on his head. Everyone was watching George as he showed his talents and turned to the beat. The same words were repeated everywhere in the house. The guests admired and clapped as the man of the day smiled with happiness.*

This passage describes George's name day. He is Greek, and appropriate behavior for this particular day is skillful dancing, a wine glass on your head, and saying the same words over and over. Unless you are familiar with these facts, none of this behavior makes sense. In contrast to the first example, knowing the topic of the passage does not explain the meaning of the content. In this example, the schemata is formalized, and "knowing" is based on experiences within an enclosed community, experiences that may not transfer outside that community. Thus, schemata, for a student coming into a dominant culture is one thing more. It is the experience of "knowing" different meanings than those of the defining context. Unfortunately, these meanings can differ from the new culture the student is experiencing. Thus, new models are needed to aid in the translations.

In fact, in most ESL classrooms, a good deal of care is taken to provide successful, appropriate models, as well as to allow for new ones. It is assumed that the form, expression, and grammar of these models are generally correct. In fact, appropriate interpersonal, nonverbal, and ritualized behaviors and language are usually modeled, discussed, and explained. Each student is treated with respect and care because the teacher is well trained and knowledgable. At the same time, classroom etiquette, greetings in formal and informal settings, and numerous other aspects of the new language experience are explored. The problem arises, however, when the student encounters models that are equally successful, but inappropriate because of taboos in our culture or their own.

ESL teachers encourage students to participate in interpersonal experiences inside and outside the classroom. Experiences can range from going to the local bar, to socializing and interacting with teachers and peers. In the following examples, another kind of teaching occurs, a kind of teaching that happens when different cultures collide. Not every teacher uses appropriate behavior, and not every lesson is polite, proper, or preferred. Some lessons demand redirection, profanity, attitudes, and challenging, aggressive behaviors. These are taboo areas for a teacher and uncomfortable lessons for tutors to teach. This knowledge is sometimes what a teacher, parent, or student might otherwise avoid, the hidden, negative knowledge, the situational taboos.

Teaching students from enclosed societies to defend themselves or to protect themselves in certain situations takes commitment on the part of the tutor and courage on the part of the student involved. To illustrate possible solutions, I present three student experiences: the first case is an international student in the classroom, the second case is a minority student in the writing center, and the third case is an immigrant student in the community. Each case that follows highlights problems that occur because of taboos—the use of inappropriate, unacceptable, or forbidden behaviors and language. As you read through these situations, decide what you would do, what your student could do, and finally, how you would teach what works. Since these experiences are real, the tutor's solution will follow the descriptions. In some cases, because of differing needs and situations, your solutions will differ from the ones provided.

THE FIRST SITUATION

A.D., a junior majoring in Engineering, is taking an ESL writing course. He was a successful student in Saudi Arabia, studying English for six years before coming to the United States. He was enrolled in an intensive English program before transferring to this school. He does well in his engineering courses and is a fairly strong writer. In addition to his classroom abilities, his social skills are strong, and he is considered a good candidate for a full (non-ESL) program next quarter. Something is going wrong in his writing class, however, and you become concerned.

You have been working with A.D. all term and have watched him become more and more anxious. He tends to get impatient once a draft is written and doesn't always take the time to edit carefully. Also, although his written English is quite strong, he still is learning English grammar and syntax and, of course, still makes sentence-level errors. Yet his impatience and uncertain control of the English language aren't the only problems. A.D.'s teacher tends to favor Hispanic students. In addition, she mistrusts A.D. and has, according to him, been very rude to him. In one situation, if a tutor had not been present, A.D. would have hit this teacher for a direct cultural insult. She knew his culture well, and she said later that she intended to upset him. She felt he had no power to object.

In addition to these circumstances, A.D. has not been feeling well lately. His spastic colon has been acting up, and he's missed several ESL classes. Now, he—like other students who have missed classes—has had to write a letter to his teacher explaining his absences. You've already worked with him on the letter twice. The teacher sent the letter back the first time because it didn't have enough detail. The second time she wanted A.D. to fix the sentence-level errors. Now she wants A.D. to make the letter flawless.

It's been difficult to get A.D. to concentrate on the writing because he's been upset about disclosing "private and embarrassing matters" to his teacher. At the same time, the assignment is seen as an insulting process because of his *relationship with the professor. You know that if the letter isn't perfect, the teacher will send it back once more. You know that if the letter isn't successful, the student will have to retake the class, and you know if he has to retake the class, he will quit school and go home without his degree.*

In this case, the professor has become a negative model; the teacher is using the student's culture and her own power to control him. The tutor is genuinely concerned and becomes increasingly alarmed at what is happening to A.D. She goes to her Director for help and to other tutors for recommendations.

The Action

Director: The Director met with the professor and verified the facts in the situation. Then, knowing that what the student said was true, the Director confered with two faculty members involved with the ESL program. They suggested she document the situation and recommended that the student be withdrawn from the classroom. Although this was good advice, the Director knew that the situation had gone too far for withdrawal. The ESL instructor would never allow it. The Director returned to the Center and met with the tutor and the student.

Tutor: The tutor was an undergraduate and knew that any solution she might propose would have consequences in A.D.'s classroom. A.D.'s stress was already at a dangerous level; any additional conflicts could prove to be too much. At the same time, she knew that this was a writing class, and any solution would have to include strengthening A.D. 's writing skills. Any action of this type could jeopardize the student. She didn't know what to do, so the tutor brainstormed with other tutors for possible solutions.

The Solutions

Director: The Director negotiated with the professor to allow one more draft. If this draft conformed to the successful model provided by the professor, then the student would be clear. A.D. agreed to accept the grade, based on points earned. He will be allowed to complete the letter.

Student: The director, tutor, and student discussed the reality of the situation, explaining the student's powerless position, the teacher's prejudice, and the certainty of failure if solutions are not discovered. The student agreed to do whatever is suggested, no matter how angry it made him.

Tutor: The tutor saw two problems, the letter itself and the writing. Consequently, she proposed two solutions: first, the student must work to complete the letter perfectly. She convinced A.D. that detail can be added, that some personal knowledge is necessary, and that doing the assignment will alleviate the pressure. The second solution was more difficult and was directed toward the writing. A.D. will need to learn to be successful in his field; that means editing, and since A.D. intends to go into business, the writing will be in that context. The tutor started a hypothetical business that makes products made from styrofoam, a substance that is mined locally by Munchkins. A.D. was President and corresponded with other students and tutors.

The Results

The student finished the letter and successfully fulfilled the assignment. He modified his behavior toward the professor, limiting his contact to business only. His presentation, after all, was that of any business professional. In addition, the business grew; other businesses began to compete with his. He had to hire, fire, buy, negotiate, call meetings, and correspond constantly. Because of these activities, his writing improved in general, his assignments in his writing class improved in particular, and, in spite of the situation in the classroom, his ability to deal with conflict improved. This quarter, A.D. is graduating and has applied to graduate school.

Classroom jeopardy, as in this example, is a common topic among writing center tutors. The assumption that accompanies this discussion is generally that once students step inside the center, they are safe. This assumption suggests that somehow tutors are more enlightened and more sensitive to these situations than many classroom teachers and that tutoring is almost always successful. For the most part, this is true, but sometimes, because of lack of experiences in tutoring and/or working with multicultural students, the center is no safer than the classroom. In the second situation, a minority student attempted to transfer experiences from her enclosed culture to the dominant one. This situation is an example of tutors' inappropriate behaviors and responses as a result of uncomfortable content, content quite appropriate in the original community. Unfortunately, in this case, the content did not retain its meaning in the new context.

THE SECOND SITUATION

A. M. is a freshman and a successful student at this university. She is an African American, from an inner city, who participated in an early entry minorities program prior to attending classes in the fall. It is her first quarter, and she is taking English 162 from a teacher who encourages students to take major risks in their writing. This frightens A. M., but her tutor convinces her to write about something she knows well. The instructor reacts well, but asks for revisions.

The session happens to be at a time when students from the tutoring practicum are observing in the Center. These particular tutors are secondary school teachers with strong opinions and little knowledge of writing center philosophy. A. M. agrees to open her session to allow one of them to tutor her. A.M. does not anticipate problems because she is a good writer.

However, once the practicum tutor reads the paper, she becomes *uncertain and asks other practicum people for suggestions. As these teachers read through the paper, they exchange glances and become increasingly agitated about the content.*

A. M.'s paper is a description of neighborhood humor, incorporating dialect, "Black Mama" jokes, and some honest descriptions of the humorous side of the black experience. The new tutors, whose experiences with minorities are limited, are uncomfortable with the content and want her to take the content out. They do not rely on the teacher's comments, which are directed toward transitions, more specifics, commas, and the need for an introduction. A. M. is confused by the reactions she is getting. She senses the discomfort with the content. Also, she senses that any additional disclosures might cause the same reactions.

These practicum tutors relied on their current intuitive models, models that do not allow for differences such as A.M.'s. These well-intentioned professionals had negative reactions because this kind of experience was new to them, and it frightened them. The results are the same as a negative model, and the tutor had to counter the effects on A. M. as well as teach the tutors.

The Action

Director: The Director also taught the practicum. She was concerned about the practicum people working with minority, immigrant, and international students because of their lack of experience and training. At the same time, she was concerned for A.M., who is adept but vulnerable in this situation. Although the Director did not plan this situation, she knew it could happen once the practicum tutors began observations. She had talked about possible approaches, but the tutors did not transfer those into this situation.

Tutor: The tutor observed the session and recognized that the student and practicum tutors were agitated. It was a night class, so regular staff were not there. In addition, no other students were being tutored at this time. It was obvious that A.M. was having difficulty; the discussion had become indirect and vague, almost codelike. The session had stopped and was focused on the content.

The Solution

Director: When the director realized what was occurring, she did not interfere but waited until the tutor responded to the situation. After the session was finished, the Director listened to the regular tutor's description. Then, she validated the tutor's approach and suggested the session as a topic of discussion for the next practicum class. At that time, she brought articles and facilitated discussions to discover strategies and techniques that work.

Tutor: When the regular tutor realized what was happening, she informed the practicum tutor that she knew A.M.'s teacher and suggested that she, the regular tutor, take over the session. Also, she added, it was getting late, and the student probably needed to go. The practicum tutor accepted these explanations, handed the student's paper to the regular tutor, and became an observer herself. The tutor proceeded to model out loud, demonstrating a successful approach:

1) The teacher focused his comments on technical concerns; the tutor did also.
2) The tutor focused suggestions on the need for successful communication: Why is this here? Why are you telling these jokes? What do you want the reader to know? The tutor encouraged the student to include a more well-defined organizational structure.
3) The tutor focused on content as part of the student's experience, the need to include those experiences in writing of this kind, and the need to expand this writing ability to include analytical techniques and strategies. At the end of the session, the tutor suggested that the student work on the computer so she wouldn't forget anything. This provided a quick exit for the student. Then the tutor talked informally with the practicum tutors.

The Results

The Director informed the staff of possible problems in this area, and all the tutors became involved in the training of these new practicum tutors. In addition, sessions for regular tutors included more information on cultural diversity, and finally, several tutors did mini-presentations on this topic.

This incident demonstrates the need for providing information during tutor training about what it is like to be from an enclosed culture—that is, a group isolated from other groups because of perceived or real differences so that they see themselves as separate from the group identified as dominant (Black, Indian, Hispanic, a religious minority, any isolated ethnic group, immigrants, and internationals). It also shows the need for discussion about multicultural issues and ways to address them. The information that emerged as the result of one such discussion is included in Appendices A and B.
In addition, the students and tutors involved combined successful characteristics shown in Appendix C. Strategies for success are critical for the survival of a student transitioning from an enclosed culture into a dominant one.

Teachers, tutors, and peers involved with students from enclosed communities encounter many experiences like the ones described in the two previous examples. Other interactions occur, however, where students do not have a tutor or a center close at hand. These situations occur in the community.

Textbooks describe idiomatic language and behaviors experienced by a student dating, socializing, or doing business in a dominant culture. In most cases, appropriate responses can be described or modeled. "Up your nose with a rubber hose!" or Blow it out your ear!" can be given meaningful contexts, as can profanity and even good-natured insults. All of these fall loosely into the category of informal situations, still found within acceptable boundaries. Sometimes, however, students encounter anti-social behavior and language.

In these cases, the students' knowledge is much like the practicum tutors. They simply do not have the experience to know what to do.

The final situation is one that occurred outside the university setting. The student was successful in the classroom, in tutoring sessions, and in dealing with typical interactions with peers. Socially, she was successful. Academically, she had negotiated well with teachers, peers, and tutors. She had learned appropriate behaviors and language, and, at least to the tutors, she seemed ready for her internship. Unfortunately, inappropriate models were never discussed.

THE THIRD SITUATION

W.W. is an International student from Hong Kong who became an American citizen in her senior year. She waits to do her internship in social work until her last quarter. Her grades are good, and she works with a tutor twice a week, sometimes more. Sensitive to language, she works as hard on informal communication as she does on appropriate language in her writing. In preparation for her internship, the tutor reviews formal and informal report writing, and the tutor wishes her luck in her experience.

W.W.'s internship is at a local children's home. She is responsible for eleven juvenile delinquents. Her supervisor is overworked, and as a result, W.W. must work with these students alone. These students realize she doesn't understand when she is being insulted or harassed. They call her "Chink" and "Bitch," as well as threaten her. She is frightened. Some of these kids are big, intimidating her and using her lack of verbal skills against her. She looks for help. "How can I write a discipline report about disrespect if I don't know when I'm being insulted?" When you ask her for examples, you are appalled. As you listen, you realize she has to learn inappropriate language to succeed in this internship or she won't graduate.

Negative, anti-social, hostile, or aggressive and coercive models are not discussed in an academic setting. In some cases, even tutors haven't experienced the behavior. In fact, for most tutors, teaching responses to such situations is embarrassing, frightening, and, if not properly done, jeopardizing to the student involved.

The Action

Director: The director discussed the problem with some of the experienced tutors. She suggested that W.W. approach her site supervisor and her university advisor. Otherwise, not much could be done because W.W.'s location was too far away, and dealing with teenagers with these problems required special training. She offered her support and trusted the tutor to do the best she could.

Tutor: The tutor realized W.W. was in trouble, and since diagnosis is critical in any situation, she began to problem-solve through the situation. She listened to W.W.'s anxiety; she identified what a professional would do; she clarified W.W.'s real options and determined what activities, privileges, and routines the young men had. Changing internships was not an option. No other sites were available, and since this was Spring quarter, W.W. would have to stay through Fall quarter in hopes of another opportunity.

The Solution

Director: The Director continued to consult with the tutor and experts that might have solutions. She recommended the use of official sanctions, denial of privileges, and limiting time spent alone with the juveniles.

Student: The student set up a contact system with her site supervisor. If she needed help, she could pick up the phone, and he would be there as fast as he could. W.W. told the tutor she would do whatever she recommended.

Tutor: The tutor knew W.W. would do whatever she suggested. So the tutor started to teach this 98 pound girl how to "have a mouth." She told her what "F— Y—" and "Your A—" meant, how *not* to react to that, and how to tell that big

B— where to "get off" and when. She taught her how to get an "attitude." "You're the one that loses if you touch me, kid!" and "I can make it so you stay a few extra months, bozo!" W.W. didn't *actually* have that much power, but her attitude was convincing. At the same time, W.W. suggested that she was "in here too, so why not help me out!" She approached the gang leader and suggested she could "Cut him some slack. You know what I mean?" Finally, she learned to say such things as "At least I have one!" and with feeling!

W.W. had to deal with profanity, aggression, and intimidation. She "put on an attitude," "called them on their shitty behavior," and told them to "Knock it off!" or maybe she'd get that "creep" in Building B to do her a favor. At the same time, she and the tutor knew professional behavior was a must, and matching language wasn't matching wits. Nonetheless, W.W. said what she meant. She was direct, not polite, and she stood her ground.

The Results

W.W. succeeded in her internship and won the respect of most of her students. She could "put on an attitude," call an inmate on his behavior, and "hold her ground" with the best of them. As a professional, she learned to distance herself, control her fear, and act on what was in front of her, to think on her feet. Her reports were clear, and she became quite adept at assertive approaches. W.W. graduated and returned to Hong Kong, where she worked with gang kids in the Hong Kong slums. Currently, she is in Los Angeles applying for jobs.

Multicultural students, such as the ones described in these situations, are real, and situations like those described are bound to occur. Inevitably, conflicting appropriate and inapproprate content, formal and informal schemata are contained in the diversity: A.D. had his cultural knowledge used against him; A.M. experienced conflicts because of different experiences within her enclosed community; and W.W. discovered a type of schemata not generally taught to a student entering a new culture. In such circumstances, a tutor's ability to successfully recognize and teach appropriate language for these writing situations becomes critical.

In essense, difficult situations in the classroom, the center, and the community affect what tutors do in their tutorials. It is not sufficient to know grammar rules, different styles, and approaches. Knowledge of diverse enclosed communities, whether they are countries or isolated populations, is essential to tutoring students like the ones in these examples.

Knowledge also includes "knowing" that what is acceptable in one culture may be taboo in another. Perceptions and misperceptions are significant in these cases because our schemata, based on our perceptions, are why we say what we say. What, how, where, when, and why we say what we say depends on experiences, languages, and taboos as much as any other aspects of communication. Therefore, tutorials must expand to include an awareness of a variety of perceptions, especially for writing. In the same way, tutors' schemata must expand to include the new diversities, assuming multiple forms of schemata and allowing for flexibility and adaptablity in interpretation and form.

Practicums must include training and opportunities to experience and understand what it means to work with students from enclosed communities. Techniques, strategies, and approaches must be developed before that student sits down in a tutorial. At the same time, not everyone can or should work with students with diverse backgrounds, but every tutor should be trained and aware of the added dimensions. Further, lessons learned from successful and unsuccessful tutorials should be shared among tutors and directors. Diversity that assumes collaboration and interaction must be present in the tutor, the tutorial, and the center.

Increasing emphasis on cultural diversity increases the possiblity of situations such as the ones described in this article. Little research exists on experiences in tutoring inappropriate behaviors and language. If you have had such an experience and are willing to share what you did, felt, and experienced, please send it to me in care of

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I will compile and share contributions with all contributers. If enough information is compiled, the results will be shared in the form of an article.

Appendix A

Student Observations and Comments

What is most difficult about university life?

1. I feel inferior.- The white/ American culture is intimidating

2. I am lonely.- I feel isolated. I can't identify with people here. It is a matter of "isness."

3. I can't relate.- The language is so indirect. I can't tell what people are thinking. People are so polite. They don't get to the point.

4. I can't understand.-Nothing means the same thing here.

What did you need to do to adjust?

Redefine myself and my world -I had to rethink the way I looked at the world. I tried to find people that were like me in personality and interests. I learned the language and behavior. I tried to be me in a new role. I found someone who believed in me, someone who told me I *could do it*.

Learn new strategies - I learned to ask for help. and I learned to accept people's suggestions. I took responsibility for my learning and myself. If I was lonely, I tried to make friends in my classes, the writing center, and in my dorm.

Be realistic - English will always be difficult, but it does get easier. Everyone worries about tests, classes, friendship, and the future. I must learn whatever it is that will help me succeed. I will survive.

Appendix B

What suggestions do have for teachers and tutors?

Allow for personal expression

Choose realistic topics- college, classroom, school, and home. Compare known schema with new schema. Use bridging schema.

Show patterns for organization and expression

Model the choices you make while writing, and tell why you are making those choices.

Encourage interaction; model negotiation.

Feed language in contexts, not separate from the content.

Comment on what is appropriate.

Model questioning strategies.

Sort and separate.

Accept without judgement/ question what YOU don't understand

Appendix C

SUCCESSFUL STRATEGIES

SOCIAL SKILLS	PATTERNS	LANGUAGE
Adaptive, verbal interactive,open	Successful strategies for studying	Prior successful educational experiences
		Content as Subject Matter
Good balance between public and private self	Consistent in identifying problems and finding solutions	Strategies for learning as necessary
Ability to ask for and accept help	Responsible for own actions	Works for meaning as well as surface correctness
emotionally mature/maturing	Seeks help	Internalizes quickly
well defined self		

Conference Groups in the Writing Center: Shared Resources

Richard Carr, Pat Price and Stephanie Athey
University of Minnesota

I

Tutors, ESL students and Composition 1013: An Overview

Rich Carr

The University of Minnesota Writing Laboratory serves as a general support service to the composition program. All students are required to take two writing courses: freshman composition (Comp 1011) and an upper division course related to their major field. The Writing Lab helps those students whose writing needs are not met in their composition course by giving them an extra hour of weekly instruction in a tutorial format. In addition, we teach two tutorial courses in the Lab : Composition 1013—Writing Practice II—and Composition 3085—Conference Course in Advanced Composition. The former course provides the focus for this paper.

Composition 1013 is the second quarter of freshman writing practice. Once a required course, it is now an option for those students with specialized writing needs. It is particularly designed for those who will encounter marked difficulty in dealing successfully with writing assignments in future courses. They may have trouble generating, developing, and organizing ideas; building arguments logically; using language effectively. The Comp 1011 instructor decides whether a student should enroll in 1013, and those referred to the course must register in one of the two subsequent quarters. Comp 1013 is hardly the norm for University students—during the 1989-90 school year the

Lab handled 45 1013 students—yet for these struggling writers the course is often essential to their academic success.

Comp 1013 is not billed as a remedial course, yet the course has a remedial component and—unfortunately—a remedial feel. The 1013 student has been separated from the group and set up in an individualized course designed to address his or her specific writing needs. Tutor and student meet for one hour each week to discuss, work on, and revise writing assignments.

For many students, this one-on-one dynamic does offer a remedy. Students are given attention they would miss in a larger class, as the instructor focuses on writing matters that concern each student particularly. ESL students comprise the larger part of Writing Lab clientele and a large share of the 1013 population as well. If the ESL students have come from a regular freshman composition section (the University offers several ESL-only sections per quarter; the native speaker courses are the "regular" ones), they probably sought to avoid attracting instructor attention, hoping to blend into the group as much as possible. If the ESL 1013 students were enrolled in an ESL freshman comp course, they most likely were in the bottom percentile of that second language group and were also less likely to participate actively or work on improving their skills in class. These second language writers can thus especially derive benefits from the concentrated dynamic of the weekly tutorial.

Yet few 1013 instructors have been happy with the course; few believe that they have given their students a full 4-credit writing course. One of the salient problems for 1013 instructors is the frequently defeatist attitude of the students. Those who have been singled out as poor writers often continue to think of themselves as poor writers struggling and suffering alone. Typical 1013 students might also have some trouble functioning as learners. They are often less adept at following directions, working with others, and participating generally than are their peers in the University at large. The one-on-one set-up does not help them become better students.

The concentrated attention of the course does not always work in the student's favor either; at times there is too much focus on one thing and one person. The teacher directs instruction to the particular reasons for the student's presence in 1013 and has tailored assignments to get at the student's writing difficulties. But the student receives response from one reader only and that reader's response is held up naturally as an authoritative one. This arrangement with the instructor as sole respondent and authority defeats the *cooperative* approach of the University of Minnesota composition program.

And Comp 1013 has just not *felt* equal to 4-credit writing course. The intensity of the contact is supposed to compensate for the reduction in overall class time. 1013 students meet with their instructor 50 minutes per week, while they would spend 150 minutes per week in a composition course. However, few would argue that this intensive 50 minutes is always time well spent; instructors complain of a lack of dynamism in the constant teacher-student interchange.

For ESL students the tutorial set-up brings disadvantages for several specific reasons. Certainly, one of the benefits of a tutorial is the friendly atmosphere that generally develops. The instructor has the role of confidence-builder, and for the defeatist writer that confidence-building is a plus. Even so, ESL students need more than a friendly, encouraging instructor; they need real skills in grammar, organization, development of ideas. The tutorial dynamic does not always allow for an easy switch from writing cheerleader to grammar teacher, and the cheerleading role may supersede the other to the detriment of the second language writers.

In the tutorial set-up the student receives no writing models for comparison; the only model is that provided by the teacher—the expert native speaker—and it is often not helpful. ESL students benefit from seeing the prose of their peers and gaining a more real sense of the assignment and a more realistic sense of the result.

The student role itself is not clearly defined in the 1013 structure. ESL students are used to dealing with teachers who allow for their not understanding or not being prepared for class, but like their American 1013 peers, they need to learn to be university students. Other students can often provide the pressure for keeping deadlines, coming prepared to discuss an article, or participating actively in discussion that a teacher cannot. In fact, 1013 usually has too much teacher talk. The teacher gives the answer, and the student does not move toward accepting a cooperative learning experience and does not learn to accept the responsibility of contributing.

Finally, the one-on-one relationship can create in the students an overdependence on the instructor. ESL student can tie their writing success to the tutorial experience and may leave the course believing that they cannot succeed without a tutor's help, especially this tutor's help.

These descriptions may overstress the negative, but last year Robin Murie, the ESL Liaison to the composition program, and I, the Writing Lab Coordinator, decided that the negatives were strong enough to warrant alteration in the structure of Comp 1013. We centered our discussions for proposed changes on the following three questions:

- How can we create a more dynamic course that allows students to take a greater role and responsibility in learning and writing?
- How can we develop a course that gives the necessary focus on the individual but does not seem a wholly remedial experience?
- How might we send these writers out into the University of

> Minnesota and elsewhere as more confident, adept writers after an enjoyable course experience?

Out of our questioning and discussing we developed the Comp 1013 Conference Course.

The University of Minnesota composition program is cooperative; composition courses are built around the concept of conferencing. Students in most writing courses are placed in conference groups of four or five to review rough drafts and to advise fellow group members on constructing their final draft. The success of conferencing is most pronounced at the lower levels; freshmen overwhelmingly rate the conference experience as the best part of Comp 1011.

We wanted a course that took the pressure off one teacher and one student and at the same time forced both sides to prepare better as teacher and student. Too often the one-to-one rapport guides the discussion and not always to great effect. A conference group component would allow for real discussion of student writing and outside readings. 1013 would have more of the shape of a course, something to be taken seriously.

We still recognized the need for individual instruction. The student has been referred because a skill or skills does not meet academic standards, and the goal of 1013 is to enable the student to overcome writing deficiencies or problems. Therefore, a tutorial component would remain an essential; students—both second language and native speaker—need expert guidance. We were also restricted by practical concerns of space and staff. Each quarter six or seven graduate teaching assistants tutor twelve hours per week each, and the ESL program provides an additional 12-18 hours of tutorial support. However, teaching 1013 is only one segment of a tutor's duties; Comp 3085 students, course referrals, and drop-ins must also be handled. Furthermore, the

Writing Lab is a small room with five tables; only so many chairs will fit around them.

Robin and I proposed a pilot 1013 Conference Course for Winter Quarter 1990. Our original plan involved a weekly 50-minute conference group meeting of three students and a weekly individual student-instructor session for 25 minutes. The conference group session would provide the benefits already mentioned, and the individual session would center on a student's special needs. The tutorial 1013 would remain for students with tight schedules, those who request it, and those with highly specialized needs. Pat Price piloted the first 1013 Conference Course in Winter Quarter 1990—an ESL group— and Stephanie Athey directed a native speaker 1013 group in Spring Quarter.

II

ESL Composition 1013: Group Pilot

Pat Price

Initially when I was asked to coordinate a group-based lab class, Composition 1013, the pilot project was not tailored to an ESL audience. Instead I devised a preliminary syllabus with flexible assignments to be modified in the second week of the quarter after I had met with my group and could assess their particular interests, needs, and problems. Since the course was designed to address the special requirements of students who had been unsuccessful in the larger freshman composition class, I planned a course emphasizing writing as a practical skill and adopting a "problem solving" approach to writing difficulties. Including a group component in a traditionally tutorial course helps to dispel the "singled out" feeling many 1013 students experience on being referred to a second quarter of freshman writing when most of their counterparts have finished their lower-division writing requirement.

The first two units of the generic syllabus hinge on two aspects of each student's "Dream Job." In the first section, students write about the kind of career they hope to prepare for in college. They also write a short paper exploring how their major prepares them for this work. Next students are required to interview a professional in their chosen field to find out what kinds of writing are required and what level of writing skill they will need to develop in order to succeed in their dream job. (Typically, students are surprised to discover the volume and variety of writing required.) Finally, they gather written materials generated on the job and use them to determine a general picture of writing needs in their chosen profession. Group meetings focus on critiquing rough drafts and generating and sharing ideas.

In the second job-related unit, students examine types of writing necessary to get a job: resumes, cover letters, requests for information, acknowledgments, writing samples, other reports. Then each prepares a job dossier. Next students look critically at writing generated on the job to see what skills they will need to develop to be successful in the workplace, noting audience, level of expertise, organizing principles, and vocabulary. Analyzing these kinds of writings is liberating for many students, helping them to determine what will be expected in their own field of expertise. After so much vocational focus, the quarter ends with more informal writing. Often students are more comfortable with this less pragmatic approach after they know and trust one another. My original assignment for the personal writing unit was for students to explore some aspect of narrative in their culture, either writing an original narrative or retelling a traditional story.

Throughout the ten-week quarter, shorter individual sessions focus on helping students to solve particular writing problems: grammar, organization, writing blocks, etc. The students could also bring in writings from outside the course for individual work. The 1013 lab course was designed to achieve a balance between peer critique and individual work.

Although the original course plan assumed a diverse student audience, scheduling considerations produced a remarkably homogeneous pilot group: three nineteen-year-old Vietnamese men, all majoring in computer science or electrical engineering. Thus, the group was technically oriented, and individual student problems were most commonly ESL-related. In general, they had little patience with more open writing assignments, so the pragmatic, work-oriented syllabus appealed to them.

After their meeting with a computer scientist at an engineering firm, all three were motivated to work on writing tasks. The computer scientist was able to emphasize the constant demand for writing at the workplace, while encouraging students to work creatively in writing since much on-the-job writing takes place in a collaborative setting, with final drafting subject to the critique of colleagues before it is sent to "management" for action. After the interview section students were more motivated and less inhibited in tackling assignments.

The second "job search" section was particularly successful. Two of the students had considered applying for internships in the spring, but fear of the process along with lack of familiarity with job documents had discouraged them. We worked through a range of documents, preparing dossiers and getting feedback. The unit ended with a role-playing mock interview with critique from both peers and instructor.

Placing an informal writing unit at the end of the quarter worked well with this pilot group. The students knew each other and were more comfortable discussing more personal subjects after seven weeks of group work. The informal narrative yielded a detailed retelling of a Vietnamese folk tale (by the quiet student), a sensitive discussion (by the tattooed student) of the significance of tattoos in his family and culture, and an exploration of the immigrant experience (by the student with a history assignment about immigration). All three noted that they could not have written these narratives at the beginning of the quarter, largely because "personal" writing is not comfortable for them outside of an intimate circle of friends and family.

Assessment was based on the quality and timeliness of drafts, critiques, revisions, and participation in group work. I evaluated the planning, organization, editing, and final product. At the end of the quarter, I collected a final folder with best revisions of all written work. I gave extra points for any extra work submitted through the quarter. I also considered the progress and improvement made by each students throughout the quarter.

Overall, the experimental 1013 course, using conference groups as well as individual tutorials, succeeded. At the end of the course, the students were bringing in drafts of 3-5 pages rather than the 1-2 they had in the initial weeks. They were more confident about approaching unfamiliar tasks, knowing that they could edit an unpromising draft with the help of peer and instructor input. They began to understand the kind of writing skills successful engineers need. They developed a better sense of what various audiences expect from reports, technical manuals, letters, and narratives. They also used the analysis of documents (technical manuals, job search materials, lab reports, etc.) to good effect in constructing their own drafts. Students responded well to individual sessions which targeted their own particular weaknesses (especially /s/ /ed/ /ing/ and articles).

The homogeneity of the group caused several problems. Since all three students shared common grammatical errors based on a similar linguistic background, they had difficulty helping each other edit drafts. Too often the individual sessions with the instructor became grammar sessions. Also, the fear of giving offense made the students shy about criticizing each other's work even when they were capable of performing useful analysis. At the end of this pilot 1013 course, I recommended forming more diverse groups, containing, if possible, representatives of both genders and representatives of more than one linguistic group.

In addition, the group was too small. Any absence, illness, or failure to provide drafts or critiques hampered effective group work. If only one student failed to attend, prepare, or speak, the "group" became "dialog." Since most students referred to Composition 1013 have had difficulties with timely preparation, some deficiencies are to be expected, at least initially. Based on this pilot, I recommended a group size of four to five to ensure a functional group.

Finally, the students were reluctant to take responsibility for their own group work. Instead, they turned to me each time any controversy arose. At first I found it necessary to absent myself from their group meetings to facilitate honest discussion. I would leave the students for 10-15 minutes, returning only after they had begun to confer. Only after we started unit two did they seem comfortable initiating discussion.

III

Movie Freaks and Writing Geeks: Pedagogy Goes Hollywood

Stephanie Athey

Lifting Remedial Gloom—A Theory of the Course

In developing my version of Writing Practice II for a group of four students, I thought back on my experiences in the one-on-one tutorial. The foremost drawback to the individual tutorial, in my mind, had been a sort of hovering, remedial gloom that, understandably, may affect any student who feels singled out for "extra" or "special" help that "average" students seem to do without. In spite of myself, I found that in the course of 50 minutes, this "gloom" could affect my spirits as well, and optimism could gradually thin as together we felt the tedium of exercises, felt overwhelmed by the number of problems to be solved, and viewed how long and hard the road to good writing may be.

Nor does the one-on-one structure encourage discussion or ingenuity. Two people confronting a writing dilemma naturally generate fewer ideas, solutions, techniques than would a classroom full of students. And again, the remedial cast to the individual tutorial assures that the tutor's suggestions carry more weight, an unfortunate message that can create dependence on the instructor's problem-solving skills.

With these cautions in mind, I chose to design my course around visual texts, that is movies. I did so not just because I *knew* movies-for-homework would enliven the group atmosphere and promote engaged discussion, but also because of my growing conviction that our electronic age requires different pedagogical materials and techniques. Students with writing trouble often have reading trouble—either on the level of comprehension or of critical reading skills. My assumption is that students are all *adept at reading visual texts* for sequence, innuendo, symbolism, themes; they are also practiced at *reacting to and talking about films* in a way that they simply aren't used to doing with print materials.

This does not mean abandoning the written text. Rather, the course tries to create a model for critical thinking, summary and analysis around this kind of familiar text, then transfers that model to an article or written text.

Course Design

The course presents three major units. Therefore, during the term, students produce a great deal of writing, but only three finished papers—two based on films, one on an article. The unit objectives break down this way:

1. Assessing and Conveying a Personal Reaction to a Film
2. Critical Reading, Summary and Analysis of a Written Text
3. Research and Analysis of a Film—research print material on a film in order to analyze the visual text.

The units all take a similar approach and propose it as a model for critical thinking on any text. In each section, the student must:

- focus on a discreet unit—one scene, one paragraph or argument;
- describe/summarize/explain that scene/argument;
- place it in context of larger film, article;
- evaluate its role or significance within that larger context.

Each course unit requires several smaller writing tasks: rush-writes, lists, summaries, outlines, rough drafts, student conferences and critical comments on group members' drafts, revision.

In dividing these tasks between group and individual sessions, I used our weekly 50-minute group sessions to discuss readings, films, conference drafts, assignments, and most importantly, to do group writing and editing exercises. During the 25-minute individual sessions, the students and I would set personal goals, do writing exercises tailored to their needs, and offer the kind of one-on-one guidance which has always been the chief calling of the Writing Lab.

Modifications to the Original Design

I realized in the middle of our first conference on rough drafts that 1013 students were the very students who never quite got what they were supposed to do in conferences for the first-level writing course. So I chose to modify conference feedback sessions into editing and revision workshops, insisting that students swap papers and write topic sentences or thesis statements for another student or rewrite entire paragraphs.

This format was extremely helpful in building critical ability, editing skills, and confidence. They began using each other's writing as models for the first time. Because these long group sessions offer enough time for four students to rewrite the same sentence or paragraph in four different ways, the workshop approach engages student creativity and creating multiple revisions, not simply the teacher's revision.

Suggestions for Further Changes

At times, the 25-minute individual sessions feel very short, especially when students come late or are having problems with the assignment. I would like to try to expand the contact time with each student. For instance, two longer individual sessions early in the quarter might provide valuable extra time in which to diagnose problems, set the goals for the quarter, and teach the student to recognize his or her particular problem situations—transitions, verbs, sentence structure . . . whatever they may be.

Results / Evaluation

I am enthusiastic about the conference group format for Writing Practice II. Sessions were not only more enjoyable for the student, but, I think, more effective as well. Over the term students improved greatly in critical reading, writing, and editing skills. In addition, the group format takes the sting out of individual tutorials, changes teacher authority in a positive way, and generates more student input. Furthermore, the students get the intensity of individual instruction as well as the benefit of a lively workshop atmosphere.

IV

Conclusion

Rich Carr

The 1013 Conference Course has become a regular option during the current school year. For Fall Quarter 1990, 28 students registered for Comp 1013, and 12 of them were placed into three groups of four. We have one native speaker group and two ESL—one of the ESL groups comprises students from ESL freshman comp sections, while the other has students from regular sections. The instructors this year have benefited greatly from the experience of Stephanie and Pat. One has revised the schedule to allow for a little more individualized instruction; another has decided to test the sharing aspect of the set up by billing the course as a publications workshop with the four students as writers and editorial board members.

We will assess the course at the end of the present school year to determine whether the format needs further revision, but for now we in the University of Minnesota Writing Lab are happy with the revised Writing Practice II. The 1013 students remain individuals with specialized needs as writers and students, and the negatives cited earlier have not disappeared. But we have created a course that forces the student to take a more active role in learning to write and writing more effectively, and we have removed some of the remedial stigma of Comp 1013 without eliminating that essential tutorial component. And they leave the course more confident, skilled writers, having benefited from the support of four other involved parties.

Wendy, The Potato Head Kids, and Me: Dealing With Sexist Representations in Language, or Un-Wrapping the Hamburger[1]

Michael Dickel[2]
University of Minnesota

I

> The sexism of languages (as usual I shall be dealing primarily with English, but languages vary in the type and degree of sexism they display) is a subject invented and researched by feminists. The ideological framework they have used is simple and explicit: briefly, they start with the hypothesis that the lexicon, grammatical structure, etc. of a given language will contain features that exclude, insult or trivialise women, and they set out to identify the features in question (Cameron 72).

It may be argued that as a male, middle-class, white guy, I should butt out. But I don't like the way things are in our culture either. It does affect me. Honest. My wife, Joanne Raymond, has her doctorate in pharmacy and is the assistant director of pharmacy at a large county hospital; she makes considerably more money than I do or probably ever will. OK. Unusual circumstance, one in who-knows-how-many. But there are words floating out there for me, pejorative, nasty words that I've heard, or inferred, or remember fearing—wimp, sissy, pussy-whipped (notice the minus-maleness of the words, the derogation by equating with female or subordination to female sexuality).

I wish to thank the many students who have participated in the exercise, and who have expanded my own perceptions of the Potato Head Kids culture, as well as the participants of the MWCA conference. I would also like to thank Professor Lillian Bridwell-Bowles, whose spirited leadership in discussions of the issues set forth here and generous encouragement were instrumental to this paper.

Finally, this paper is dedicated to Julia Sarah Raymond Dickel and Rebecca Anne Raymond Dickel, in the hope that growing up surrounded by cultural critism will help lead to cultural literacy without depriving them of childhood joys.

After Joanne received her doctorate, she took a job in Connecticut and I went along to write and be a house-husband. Nearly everyone who met me asked what job brought *me* to Connecticut, what job was *I* looking for (when they discovered I had followed Joanne and not vice versa), but was I really going to *make* Joanne do "all the work"? OK, if I'd played the game the way the culture (and language?) dictate I should, I would be "the bread winner" and not have the same struggles Joanne has; I'd be supported in my desires to dominate, compete, and win. But I just want to justify writing this at all. I have had at least something of a taste of being "other" than the white-male norm projected in our culture.

> It is not good enough to shrug our shoulders and say that male bias in usage is purely grammatical, and that therefore it does not matter (Cameron 73).

Of course, there's my five-year-old daughter, Julia, and my two-month-old daughter Rebecca. I may be writing for them as much as for anyone. They remind me that the house is on fire and I sit at the keyboard, playing with words. I focus on Julia,[3] because the narrative behind it begins when she was three. Joanne took her to a friend's house, a friend who practices medicine with a license and who had just had a baby. Julia wanted to know about this new mother, and when Joanne told her that she was a doctor, Julia corrected her. "No, Mamma," Joanne related Julia's response to me later, "Only mens [sic] are doctors. Women are nurses."

While I'm not sure that Julia understood fully that doctors occupy a higher-up position on the hierarchy, it's clear that where there's smoke . . . well, she had already begun to learn the classification system, hadn't she? Now it is even clearer. She loves Barbie, dresses in fancy dresses "like a bride," and understands gender roles in fairly traditional ways, although now she does a better job of understanding that either men or women can have most jobs.

Is gender construction implicit in the language? If we correct our children, (as Joanne, who considered briefly the notion of having Julia call her doctor-mamma, certainly did back when Julia was three), are we treating the symptom or the disease? An uneasy question, if ever there was one.

> The question of whether linguistic sexism is a cause or an effect of women's oppression, and the problem of defining its boundaries, ultimately links up with the debate on language and reality, who controls language and who is alienated from it (Cameron 75).
> One implication of this argument is that the ability of language to reinforce the status quo helps to perpetuate sexist attitudes and practices and inhibit social change. Another implication is that women are likely to "see themselves as the language sees them . . . ." It seems fairly clear that the net result of either or both possibilities is to help "keep women in their place" (Adams and Ware 67).

The answer to the question of treating symptom or disease is both. Separating cause and effect, in this case in particular, may be another example of artificial opposites, empirical-artifact dichotomies. So many biological systems appear to have feedback mechanisms, why not the cultural organism of human society? If sexism, inherent in the fabric of the culture, produces sexist language, then sexist language no doubt helps re-in-force and teach sexism to the users of that language. Language feedsback the sexism, sexism feedsback through language. It's an unhealthy diet, at best. I don't want to get into -ological questions of primacy, just to observe that from where I'm standing, it looks as though treating symptoms alone will not eliminate the disease, but may help, while treating the dis-ease caused by sexism alone may lead to reinfection from the language. Symptom treatment must be deepened, the roots of the tumor must be removed, more than cosmetic cleaning up of pronouns and word endings is needed. I'm sure our doctor would agree, at least for cancer, there is a need to treat the tumor (symptom *and* source of the disease) and the whole disease—cancer throughout the body, all of the tumors, all of the cancerous cells—as well as a need to eliminate carcinogenic environmental and life-style factors.

The changes, in short, ought to occur at the process level of language, the content, the context, the semantic levels, the usage, the lexical, the grammar, all. And in the beliefs, values, practices of society, too. Also, in the images. But how many times, in my own as well as others' teaching, has the issue of sexist language been reduced to ". . . the use of male pronouns as generic or unspecified terms . . ." (Cameron 84)? And how differently can it be approached in, say an upper-division composition course I teach, Comp 3015, "Writing for the Sciences"? Especially considering Cameron's point that ". . . more women will not take up science just because scientists are referred to as *she* "(88).

II

> The outcry which so often attends the demand for linguistic reform comes from those who do not want to be shaken out of the old way of looking at things. If these people are numerous and powerful,

> strong conservative forces come into play and reform does not succeed (Cameron 87).

Oddly enough, this brings me to hamburgers. No, being more specific, this brings me to the wrappings in which some hamburgers (actually, it probably was a cheeseburger) are sold to little girls. That is, to my little girl, Julia. Am I being the patriarchal protector of her honor? Well, I hope I can help, parentally, to protect her options, her self-esteem, her awareness of the world. These ought not to be regulated by hamburger wrappings. But wrappings have a way of intruding, and the year my daughter asserted the primacy of men in the medical profession, they intruded right into Comp 3015, where they have remained. They have also spread to other composition courses, and into tutorial sessions in the writing lab at the University of Minnesota, where I spend some of my teaching time.

I took Julia to Wendy's for a burger one night a couple of years ago, and bought her the "Kids' Meal." You know the kind, perhaps? It comes in a cardboard box. Inside: a hamburger (or cheeseburger, or even bits of chicken), french fries, and a toy prize. The outside of the box: brightly colored images of the toys, Potato Head Kids, going about Potato Head Kids activities. And, although a cosmetic approach alone might have corrected the usage (policeman to police officer, for instance), this box-wrapping had a lot to say about the potato head culture that goes far beyond language fixing—and by extension, a lot to say about us as producers and consumers of that culture (and its wrapping). My daughter asked me to read the box to her and help her with the activities. These are the words that I found:

> Policeman Duke™ is directing traffic. Circle the vehicles going in the same direction as the arrow in the stoplight.
>
> Help Cap'n Kid™ discover four things near his ship that rhyme with "sail."
>
> Slugger's™ favorite bat is different from the rest. Which one is it?
>
> While Krispy™ played on the beach, she lost her radio, beach ball, umbrella and lotion. Can you find them?
>
> (Wendy's® Kids' Meal™ Box)
> (™Playskool, Inc.)

The day after I bought this hamburger container, my students saw a box. They noted that it had bright colors. They described the potato heads. One or two mentioned that each potato head was doing something. One noticed that the only clearly defined (by language) female potato head sunbathed while the males were active. I asked them what we knew about potato head culture from the box. Active. Adventurous. Playful—they had fun. Yes, yes, yes. At least, the males. I asked them about gender roles in the society (a culturally defined question?). Policeman Duke, male, is authoritative, competent, directs traffic, I pointed out. Yes, they agreed. And Cap'n Kid ventures forth, sword in hand (are all males aggressive, domineering, power-hungry?), discovering items that rhyme with "sail." The woman (notice) who observed that female potato heads (Krispy) sunbathed opposed this to males playing baseball (Slugger). Interestingly enough, Slugger's text has no sex-linked pronouns. The male identification, I pointed out, was based on the assumption, born out perhaps by the other images, that males were the active members of the culture. Another woman pointed out that the infield of the baseball diamond was grass, and that men played with grass infields but not women.[4] A man in class pointed out that a nurse was also playing baseball. (Although I raised the question of the gender of the nurse then, as will be seen, potato head nurses on hamburger wrapper-boxes are female).[5]

Finally, I explored another aspect, a key aspect to my own critique of the Wendy's food covering. You see, the pictures are puzzles and games. Cap'n Kid, with the child's assistance, discovers. Policeman Duke directs, the child identifies which cars defy his direction (indicated by an arrow on a green light—many students understood this to be a sign of conformity as a potato head value). Slugger has a favorite bat, different from the others, which the child locates. Krispy has lost her things at the beach. She needs the child's help to find them—note, she does not discover items on the beach like Cap'n Kid, she is not active like Slugger, she has no authority like Policeman Duke. She has no rank (Captain, for instance) or role in the society. She is incompetent, passive, and presumably not having fun (anymore). Am I overstating the case? Is she Krispy from staying out in the sun too long? Doesn't she have *any* sense?

Well, so much for the box my daughter received. This was not (I confess) her first potato head kid, although this is the first time I *looked* at what I was subjecting her to, what I was nurturing her with.[6] This time, she "won" (or lost) Policeman Duke. Have I helped anything by renaming the sexless plastic object "police officer"? Especially when the text of the box is nonverbal as much as verbal? Krispy clearly dresses from cultural stereotypes, complete with a flowered hat and long eyelashes; the gender, authority and action of the others comes across through posture, mustache, and "masculine" brown shoes. In short, image accompanies text as ". . . strong conservative forces come into play . . ." (Cameron 87) and assert sexism disguised as food wrapping (nurturance).

> Connect the dots and see how Fireman Sparky™ can safely bring a little kitty down from a tall tree.
>
> Which way should she go? Help nurse Sophie™ find the way to her patient on the top floor of the hospital.
>
> (Wendy's® Kids' Meal™ Box)
>
> (™Playskool, Inc.)

Have I gone too far in interpreting one box? The box occupied my thoughts throughout the evening I bought it. The next day, before the class I was responsible for teaching, I went to another Wendy's and asked if I might buy some of the Kids' Meals boxes. After being shuffled to the manager, *he* generously gave me five boxes (one for each of the small groups I divide my class into). He didn't ask why I wanted to use them for a class, or what I intended to do with them, and I admit that I didn't offer to explain (except to say that I wanted to explore the potato head culture using the boxes). These boxes were not the same as the other box. (I then made my way to the original Wendy's and obtained, from the male manager, ten boxes which have already been described.)

On one side of the new box, however, Fireman Sparky was going to save a kitty; the child discovers how this competent and authoritative man will do so by connecting dots to reveal the ladder leaning into the tree. On the other side, nurse Sophie has lost (?!) her patient, and needs the child's help to find the patient. Not only is she in a stereotypical (traditional?) role of a care-giver, she is incompetent (scatter-brained?) at her work and, while Policeman Duke, Cap'n Kid, and Fireman Sparky all get to capitalize their titles, nurse is relegated to lower-case lower-class. Some of my students, in the many times I have reused these boxes, have pointed out that the typography varies with gender—the males have larger type and/or more prominently placed type, and the females have less well placed type and, in the case of poor nurse Sophie, significantly smaller type.

Why isn't the child doing the puzzles asked to help the (lost) fire fighter find his way to the fire? Or to connect the dots to reveal what the nurse uses to help her patients (perhaps a bed pan, for realism and a dose of why men don't do that work as much as women)? "Only men's is doctors, women are nurses," young Julia's voice echoes from the beginning of this paper.

III

I have no illusions that positive language will change the world. More women will not take up science just because scientists are referred to as *she*. But what might be achieved is a raising of people's consciousness when they are confronted with their own and others' prejudices against saying *she* (Cameron 88).

While the argument can easily be made, on the basis of counting male and female characters, that women are "represented" on the boxes,[7] I don't think that it is too much to say that the makers of these boxes have created sexist texts that are symptomatic of their at least unexamined sexism, if not volitional "conservative forces."[8]

These boxes re-in-force sexist values in the culture. Unfolding the boxes constructs definitions for both feminine and masculine genders. The message of potato head kids is the message of our own culture, which produces them. Women are portrayed as incompetent, passive, care-givers, lacking rank and authority. Men are authoritative (domineering?), adventurous (hostile?), and rescuers (interfering?). The hamburgers and fries inside the package *may* pass for nurturance, but the wrapper is reactionary garbage, poison that must be answered with sedition against the (male) authoritarianism that produced it. That Playskool, Inc., produces the Potato Head line raises serious questions about the products our children play with every day.

As an exercise, the activity of discovering the values inherent in the coverings helps students to recognize that equalizing representation—say by alternating he and she—is not enough. The content of the representation matters every bit as much, if not more, than the numbers, and this holds for issues of race, gender, sexual preference, and all of the other "-isms" based in prejudice. It may even hold for issues of quotas in desegregation—numbers count, but content matters.

IV

Where do folk-linguistic stereotypes come from? Do they come from boxes that wrap hamburgers? Yes, in part. And yes, in part, stereotypes create the boxes. Both must be stopped. One feeds the other, both are garbage. Throwing the boxes away is not enough. They are recycled in the minds of children who read them. Calling the wrappers into question and holding Wendy's accountable could be a beginning—a beginning that includes treating the symptom (the box) and the dis-ease (the underlying sexism that those individuals who create, approve, produce and pass out the boxes and potato head kids—and all of the other toys and books and boxes of propaganda—perpetrate and perpetuate).[9] I hope that bringing the boxes to my students' attention might also be a step, with luck and perseverance, towards more women taking up science. And challenging it and its assumptions, especially, but not limited to, those assumptions about women, minority, and age.

In my classes I state, finally, that this box was what *I* meant by sexist and racist language—that changing a few pronouns in papers was not enough. What I try to get across is that students—and all of us—need to be aware of, and not pass on, language and images that "exclude, insult or tivialise" (Cameron 72) any group (gender / sex / race / sexual preference / religion / etc.) or member of that group (on the basis of that membership).[10] I didn't have Cameron's exact words that first day I used the exercise, but I do now. What we all need to do, myself amply included, is be aware of and not pass on (especially, but not exclusively, to children) language and images that "exclude, insult or trivialise" any group, or any member of any group because of their membership in that group. That includes men who don't make as much money as their wives (and don't, by virtue of that fact, have biological/anatomical defects), women who are doctors or anything else they freely (and what does this mean, if freedom is expressed by the images on hamburger boxes?) choose to be, and, yes, potato head kids. Especially nurse Sophie and Krispy. They have the right to be seen as active, competent, fully capable members of the culture. And the right to see themselves reflected as such in the signs of the culture. Especially food wrappers.

If this text were a fiction, and not bound to what actually happened (or my interpretation of what actually happened), and if I could build an allegory, I would have added a sister. I would have taken the place of my students, and let my sister lead me to understand the meaning of the text that wrapped my daughter's food. And I would join arms with my sister, because what hurts her hurts me, and because what limits her possibilities limits mine, and because those who oppress are damaged by the oppression, and I don't want to be damaged. But I have no biological sister, and so I call to my brothers, biological and otherwise. Let's stop the bullshit and speak out. End our silence, now. Maybe then we can find our sisters, whole people.

But we cannot wholly find our sisters until we, too, become whole. And it is important to note, to point out, to recall, that the males on those boxes had to be authority figures (controlling), aggressive (hostile), rescuers (interfering) and that they do not fail or lose things. Along with the messages which oppress women, men become oppressed and limited in their range of existence, as well. Men, as constructed in our culture, cannot allow themselves to be vulnerable, make mistakes, or follow. They cannot be whole.[11] The men are just as wrapped up by the hamburger covering as the women, but they won't even notice, because along with that control, aggression, hostility, and (pre-tense of) invulnerability, come privilege, power and economic advantage. At what cost? Certainly more than the cost of a hamburger. Even if it was a cheeseburger.

Notes

[1] The class room exercise described in this paper, along with discussion of the themes within this paper, were part of a presentation at the Midwest Writing Centers Association (MWCA) Fall Conference, October 6,1990, under the title: "Wendy's, the Potato Head Kids, and Me: Dealing with Sexist and Racist Representations in Language." This paper is available on microfiche from the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) of the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OER).

[2] Michael Dickel, BA, MA, is currently working on a doctorate in English at the University of Minnesota, where he teaches in the Program in Composition and Communication and edits "Words Worth," the weekly book review section of the student newspaper, *The Minnesota Daily.*

[3] And for this paper, which originated before Rebecca, will remain with Julia.

[4] Not being a tremendous baseball or softball fan, I must confess that I still don't know if this is true or not.

[5] At the MWCA conference, one participant pointed out to me that although a nurse is at bat in the picture, Slugger has his mitt raised, the ball the nurse just hit clearly going directly to it. And this without even looking at the ball or the nurse. "Easy out"? Or just plain "easy"?

[6] Granted she was only three. I only "subjected" her when I read the words—which says something about the dominant and oppressive nature of print—but the pictures were still "readable," to a significant extent.

[7] There are two women and four men, so even this argument is somewhat questionable.

[8] What else can be said about a national hamburger chain with a female name, a girl's image for a logo, "hot and juicy" burgers (and her buns?), and a "Pick-up" window where other chains have "Drive Up" or "Drive Through" windows? (And, this chain is named for the owner's daughter, no less!)

[9] Here, I am guilty of my own silence. I have never confronted Wendy's with this issue, and as the Potato Head Kids have long gone from the boxes, I no longer know whether that would be a relevant act or not. Silence (particularly male silence) may be one of the largest forces among those "strong conservative forces." My own silence included.

[10] I am aware that this begins to sound like the Helms amendment, and wish to acknowledge the complex issue of censorship. While I want my students to enjoy the full freedom of the first amendment, I also will set limits on what I find acceptable and on what I will read. I reserve my first amendment rights to challenge students on beliefs or patterns of behavior (in their writing) which I believe might damage them or society at large. Yet, the basis of a free society must remain open debate, and even objectionable views must be included in that debate. So my students are not graded down for their beliefs but will continue to receive comments on those beliefs. Ultimately, I am interested in consciousness-raising for those who repeat cultural beliefs inadvertently, that is, for those who wish to have choices and options. As a teacher, the best I can do is increase a student's perception of available options and trust that student to make sound choices.

[11] For a thorough and eloquent exploration of the ethos of masculinity, especially as related to sexuality and spirituality, see: Nelson, James B. The Intimate Connection: Male Sexuality, Masculine Spirituality. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1988. A discussion of his work can be found in my essay-review of Nelson's book, published in Journeymen: A Quarterly Newsletter Exploring Men s Issues Winter 1991: 4. For a problematic discussion of masculine lack of intimacy and friendship, see: Miller, Stuart. Men & Friendship. San Leandro, CA: Gateway Books, 1983 (1986). A discussion of the problems I find with Miller's book will

appear in the next issue of Journeymen available from the publisher at 513 Chester Turnpike, Candia, NH 03034.

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Wendy's® Kids' Meal™ Boxes, ©1988 Wendy's, ©1988 Playskool, Inc.

Reattainment of Writing Expertise of Adult Reentering College Students

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At an upper-division university, a literate skills test-remediation model was implemented in 1983 (Suddick and Vaccaro) with the verbal component assessed by the Test of Standard Written English (Educational Testing Service, 1974-1978). The TSWE was superseded by a writing sample in 1984. The essay was evaluated on five criteria, but a pass-fail score was reported. The evaluation model, with the assistance of Educational Testing Service, was modified in 1988.

The institution opted to evaluate essays on four criteria. These and their denotations are as follows:

A. Focus - The paper must have a controlling idea or topic statement in response to the topic.

B. Organization - The paper must show clear and coherent development of the controlling idea.

C. Elaboration (Support) - The paper must indicate details or reasons to support the controlling idea. Details and reasons should be relevant, clear and adequate in number.

D. Conventional (Mechanics) - The paper should be written using correct sentence structure, grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization, and should avoid primer-style writing.

Each criterion is clearly defined on a six point score: 1 = Seriously inadequate, 2 = Inadequate, 3 = Unsatisfactory, 4 = Satisfactory, 5 = Good, and

6 = Superior. Obviously, values of 1 to 3 are not acceptable, but values of 4 to 6 are acceptable.

While four criteria were evaluated, the institution opted to have the evaluators report a total score—i.e, 1 to 6—as a composite. Essays are assigned to trained readers at random and each writing sample is evaluated twice. After the first pair of readings, only pass-fail papers—i.e., values of 1, 2 or 3 versus values of 4, 5 or 6—are reread by two additional readers who are assigned at random. For papers read by four evaluators, the sum of the scores is used to define fail and pass, a composite total of 14 or less versus a total of 15 or higher, respectively.

Students are notified of their meeting or not meeting the expectation of the university. Per policy, students not passing the examination have another attempt to meet the requirement by the testing option before they are required to successfully pass a writing equivalent course. In addition, students prior to retesting have the option of enrolling in a non-credit four-hour workshop to prepare students to challenge the examination.

In the first workshop session, the scoring criteria and common mistakes made in essays are presented. Then the students draft an essay using the prior examination prompts. The writing samples are evaluated per the criteria prior to the second meeting. At that time, students are given constructive feedback to improve their writing.

All students who retested did not avail themselves of the non-credit workshop; thus, there was a unique opportunity to compare and contrast the effects of retesting with and without the benefit of short-term instruction. The mean retest scores for the treated and control students having a wide range of test scores is presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1
Mean Retest Scores for Treated and Control Students with Varying Original Mean Scores

First Test	Control	Treated
1.0	1.04	1.08
1. 5	1.06	1.16
2. 0	2.17	2.22
2.5	2.18	2.83
3.0	3.39	3.45
3.5	4.03	4.18

Several trends were evident. Irrespective of treatment or control status, students had higher means at retest and students with higher means gained more than students with lower scores. Lastly, those in the treatment group gained more than those in the control group.

Work Cited

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Contrastive Rhetoric and Tutoring ESL Writers

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One of the most difficult problems that ESL students face at American universities is writing papers in the American academic expository style. Writing Center tutors face an equally difficult task when ESL students come to them for help with their papers. The first temptation is to correct all those local errors (articles, prepositions, subject-verb agreement, etc.). Unfortunately, global problems such as the rhetorical or discourse structure of the essay are sometimes ignored in the attempt to make the paper grammatical—at least. This paper will focus on the global problems that ESL writers have when writing in English as their second language. It will review Kaplan's four rhetorical patterns and make suggestions for how tutors might approach the compositions of ESL students.

An English Pattern

Kaplan described the English expository rhetoric as direct and linear. A general statement is made in a topic sentence or a thesis statement, the statement is then supported with more specific information in the body of the paragraph or essay, and then the statement may be restated in a conclusion. This pattern can be both inductive or deductive. It is direct and explicit and avoids digression and ambiguity. Americans view this style of writing as manifestations of honesty and simplicity. On the other hand, others may view it as simple and rude. Kaplan diagramed this pattern as a straight vertical line (45-46).

A Semitic Pattern

The Semitic pattern is a non-linear pattern characterized by parallelism at both the sentence and the discourse level. The form has its roots in an oral tradition and has poetic characteristics. Unlike the English linear pattern, the semitic pattern does not clearly state the main point in a topic sentence or thesis statement. Instead, the writer uses four forms of parallelism to convey his or her meaning to the reader: synonymous, synthetic, antithetic, and climatic parallelism. As Kaplan has reported, these parallelisms are marked by a preference for coordination as opposed to subordination: the latter would be more common in English rhetorical patterns. This pattern of writing can often be identified by the excessive use of coordinating conjunctions. It was diagramed as a series of horizontal lines with the ends of the previous lines connected to the beginnings of the following lines with a dotted line (46-49).

These four forms or parallelism are clearly visible at the sentence level. For the first, synonymous parallelism, the initial and final clauses of a compound sentence are in complete symmetry: it uses conjunctions of addition (and) or sometimes by a comma split. (For examples, see Appendix I: sentences I-1, II-1, II-2, III-5.) Second, in synthetic parallelism, the final clause fulfills the intent of the first clause: connectors of cause (because, since) or of purpose (therefore) often divide these two clauses. (See Appendix I: I-2, IV-1, IV-3.) Third, in antithetic parallelism, the first clause is illuminated by its opposite in the second part of the discourse: it uses connectors of contrast (but, however). (See Appendix I: I-3, III-1, III-3, III-4, IV-6.) Fourth, climatic parallelism presents the main idea or subject last: the concept is finished in the last word. (See Appendix I: I-4, IV-1.) (Kaplan 46)

Although less visible, the manifestations of these four parallelisms at the discourse level are more significant. For paragraphs or essays written with synonymous or antithetic parallelisms, the main idea may never be stated, but merely implied. It may also be constantly repeated through synonymous parallelism or repeatedly denied through antithetic parallelism. For similar writing with synthetic or climatic parallelisms, the main idea will not be stated initially, but will be concluded or proclaimed at the end of the passage.

The above contrastive perspective on English and Semitic patterns would suggest at least two specific implications for tutoring Arabic writers. First, when using synonymous or antithetic parallelism, Arabic writers may imply the main idea without an explicit statement. When using synthetic or climatic parallelism, the main idea may appear at the end rather than the beginning of the paragraph or essay. After identifying the main idea by both reading the composition and discussing it with the writer, the tutor needs to suggest that this idea be stated clearly at the beginning of the paragraph or essay. Second, at the sentence level, many connectives will need to be deleted, and in some cases, subordination will need to replace coordination.

An Oriental Pattern

In his writing about the Oriental pattern, Kaplan points out that Oriental writing is marked by what native English readers may call an approach by indirection; paragraph development turns round the subject, but the subject is never looked at directly. This pattern is diagramed as a spiraling line that begins away from the center and circles around the center until it almost touches it (49-50).

Both from a western and a Chinese viewpoint, the Chinese rhetorical pattern differs significantly from its English language counterpart. From the western perspective, the Chinese writing pattern is indirect and implicit—the opposite of the English model. The Chinese traditionally use a rhetorical pattern called, "Chi-Cheng-Zhuan-He," which means beginning-following-turning-closing and is regarded by native English speakers as a non-linear pattern. From a Chinese perspective, exposition itself is defined differently. Westerns would stereotype Chinese rhetoric as "beating around the bush" or "never getting to the point." The Chinese equivalent to the English word "exposition" is 説 , "shuo." This Chinese character is a compound word; the first word is 兑, which means "word," and the second word is 言 , which means "to please." The efforts "to please" in the use of "the word" often result in subtle or indirect reference strategies in compositions. On the other hand, the Chinese may stereotype the English pattern as unsophisticated and rude—perhaps even crude.

The four-part Chinese pattern can be difficult for English speakers to identify if they do not know what they are looking for. In the Chinese pattern, "chi," or the beginning part, is not necessarily the same as the English introduction, where the thesis sentence must be stated. It may serve just as a beginning and simply state a very general topic. Consequently, it may appear as a too general thesis statement. "Cheng," or the following part, can either contain a topic statement or just continue what is discussed in the "Chi" part. The "Zhuan" or turning part is similar to the English body: it provides examples or turns to another subject. Either way, this material in the "Zhuan" is connected to the main idea. At the same time, the main idea may not yet be introduced even by the "Zhuan" part. The "He" or closing part does not simply mean that everything talked about in previous parts comes together to an end. The

Chinese writers like to place greater importance on this part compared to any other. In this "He" part, the purpose or the thesis must be stated. This four-part pattern is also used in Japan and Korea. The Japanese example in Appendix II represents this pattern with a paragraph for part of the pattern.

The Chinese believe that this method of writing is analogous to the artist drawing the dragon. After he draws the tail, the body, and head of the dragon, the artist would spot the eye of the dragon with the right size, the right shades of ink, and in the right place, thus giving life to the dragon or giving a perfect effect to the picture. This traditional four-step pattern is not the single pattern in China now, but the present Chinese rhetorical structure is influenced by this inductive pattern.

Because of the above pattern, Oriental writers will have problems with the main idea and supporting ideas. First, tutors need to identify the topic sentence in the last section of the composition and either suggest that the students rewrite their conclusion as an introduction or to begin their essay at what had been the conclusion. Second, the "Cheng" and "Zhuan" parts of the composition may lack support for the main idea. After identifying the tangential material, the tutor needs to discover how this material relates to the topic and how it can be revised to support the main idea directly.

A Romance Pattern

For the Romance pattern, Kaplan has suggested that writers digress from their main topic more freely than in English. Kaplan's point seems relevant while investigating some essays written by students with a Romance background. The diagram of this pattern would be a crooked vertical line with each crook in the line as a digression (50-51). The particular piece of writing investigated in Appendix III shows evidence of different aspects of digression.

The first element which will strike the reader of the chosen text is the use of parentheses. Everything in parentheses is a digression. The writer gets away from his main point to clarify a second point, to make some unnecessary comments or to give some definition. Secondly, the writer makes a great use of free modifiers which play a role of commenting on something already stated. Although those modifiers are often awkwardly used, the writer's intent of annotation appears clearly. Finally, and maybe here is the most striking case of digression, the main idea does not appear in the first sentence; neither does it come in the first sentences of the last paragraph. After a whole paragraph in which the writer describes a specific electrical instrument, its effectiveness, his pleasure of working with it, it is only in the last two sentences of the last paragraph, through an anecdote, that the main idea is scattered.

For tutors, specific suggestions are again in the same three areas as with Arabic and Oriental writers. First, Romance students may have the same problem as the Oriental students if their whole essay is a digression from a main topic that is stated at the end. In this case, the writer will need to move the topic sentence or thesis statement to an initial position. For the problem of digressions in the body, the tutor will need to ask questions about the relevance of digressive material to the main theme of the composition and guide the ESL writer to an understanding of what is supportive and digressive material. At the sentence level, the use of free modifiers needs to be identified and these modifiers will either need to be deleted, connected to the object of their modification, or revised into another sentence.

Tutoring Implications

In addition to the specific implications mentioned above for each pattern, contrastive rhetoric also has some general suggestions for how to help ESL writers, but at the same time, tutors have to be conscious of how both the specific and these general suggestions may elicit a negative affective response from their ESL writers.

Three general implications can guide the tutor. First, global errors are more important than local errors. In other words, tutors need to pay attention to rhetorical structure first and worry about sentence or word level problems last. Many of the sentence level mistakes will disappear with the revision of the rhetorical structure. Second, good writing or good writers in one language may not translate directly into good writing and writers in a second language. The ESL student may have a well-organized, well-conceived composition written to a specific audience, but it will be perceived by native English readers as "beating around the bush" or as "ambiguous" because the logic of organization, the conception of good writing, and the audience are categorically different for the two cultural groups. Third, tutoring ESL writers is not the same as tutoring native English writers. Helping someone change her/his whole view of the composition process is much more difficult than, and requires a approach different from, helping others refine idiosyncratic discrepancies between their individual and their own cultural norms.

In short, contrastive rhetoric provides many insights into the linguistic and thought patterns of ESL students and how these patterns influence ESL writers. These insights can help the tutor both to understand what the ESL writer is trying to communicate and to provide suggestions for how to transform the composition into the English pattern. In this process, the tutor is helping ESL students to transform their writing from the patterns of their own culture to academic expository prose within American culture.

At the same time, these insights and suggestions may be rejected by the ESL writer and can appear ethnocentric. As ESL writers have planned and organized their essays, they may reject the suggestions for change. For example, one Japanese student complained that such a transformation would take the art out of her writing. The tutor should be prepared for such complaints and realize that this rejection may be part of the "culture shock" of American rhetoric. Patience and empathy are the tutor's best ally, as the ESL writer copes with this "academic culture shock."

Most importantly, tutors must realize that they are not helping students transform their compositions into a better rhetorical pattern but into a different pattern—one commonly used in the English language. Tutors must realize that all patterns of writing (English, Semitic, Oriental, Romance or whatever) have value: they must understand the poetry of the Semitic pattern, the subtlety and sophistication of the Oriental pattern, and the added interest that digressions can produce in the Romance pattern. At the same time, the tutor must suggest how the student will transform the composition into one that will communicate completely the intended message to their American professors. The end result should be a writer with a command of two different rhetorical patterns and a knowledge of when and how to use them: in other words, a bicultural writer.

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This collection includes both theoretical articles, multilingual comparisons, and contrastive studies across languages. The latter include studies of Hindi, Thai, Arabic, and Vietnamese.

Appendix I: Examples of Parallelisms in Arabic Pattern

I. (1) His descendants will be mighty in the land **and** the generation of the upright will be blessed.

(2) Because he inclined his ear to me, therefore I will call on him as long as I live.

(3) For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: But the way of the wicked shall perish.

(4) Give unto the Lord, O ye sons of the mighty, give unto the Lord glory and strength. (Kaplan, 1984, p. 47)

II. (1) The contemporary Bedouins, who live in the desert of Saudi Arabia, are the successors of the old bedouin tribes**,** the tribes that was fascinated with Mohammad's message, **and** on their shoulders Islam built its empire.
(2) I had lived among those contemporary Bedouins for a short period of time, **and** I have learned lots of things about them.

III. (1) They are famous of many praiseworthy characteristics, **but** they are considered to be the symbol of generosity; bravery; and self-esteem.
(2) **Like** most of the wandering peoples, a stranger is an undesirable person among them.
(3) **But**, once they trust him as a friend, he will be most welcome.
(4) **However**, their trust is a hard thing to gain.
(5) **And** the heroism of many famous figures, who ventured in the Arabian deserts like T. E. Lawrence, is based on their ability to acquire this dear trust!

IV. (1) It took me a while before I adopted to the American culture, **so** I felt lonely and the ring was my only companion.

(2) Everytime I look at the ring I also remember the advice my mother gave with it.

(3) **So** as you can conclude it is not the materialistic value of the ring that is important to me, it is the **memory of the ring.**

(5) She told me, "Son, you are going to a country with different language and culture.

(6) You are going to face problems **but** be strong and struggle to get your education and come back to us."

Appendix II: Japanese Inn: Ryokan

When you go on a trip, the first thing you care will be an accommodation. If you have a chance to visit my country, Japan, I want to recommend you to stay at a ryokan—a Japanese traditional inn.

Ryokans are usually located in nice sightseeing places such as hot springs which attract not only Japanese but also foreign tourists and the places of the beautiful scenery combination of mountain and ocean view.

Another attractive point of Ryokans is its delicious meals. While you are out for sightseeing or taking bath (I mean a bath in a hot spring!), your meal will be already ready in your own guest room. Usually there is no restaurant or cafe in typical ryokans. It is a custom to eat with your company in your guest room so that you can enjoy the meal by yourselves and can take time as long as you want. Also you will be surprised to see the number of dishes which occupies the table. In average you can expect seven to ten different dishes from authentic Japanese to Western style dishes. It is beyond description to have delicious meals enjoying the beautiful natural views from the window of your guest room.

Of course we have many modern international hotels in Japan; however, they look similar to other such hotels in all over the world. You can stay at Hilton hotel in every country. So why do you want to stay in a same atmosphere as your country's? Choosing a ryokan as an accommodation during your stay in Japan is a better way to experience Japanese traditional culture.

Appendix III: Romance Example

I love our old family picture album. It is full of old pictures; babies, young couples in love, old couples and more babies, that were born before the first world war. Of all those pictures there are some that for some reasons I like them the most. Those are my grandparents pictures. I never had the chance to meet them when they were alive. Through those photographs I learned how they were and how they looked. My grandmother how arrogant she was, perfect hair, fancy clothes. She loved parties, friend. How ironic to learn that she died in rags, insane. Her husband (my grandfather) a dignified, very well educated man, always looked mean, or unhappy maybe. He died too young. Just he looking at those pictures I could write a book if I new how to, but then I think what is the big thing about it, what is so special about them. In a century from now only pictures would be left from us on blurry memories perhaps, because we all be gone. And maybe another young person (like me) will be looking at the same type of pictures and thinking similar things.

How Different Writer-Respondent Relationships Affect Collaboration

Carol Severino
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When I was an undergraduate at a church-affiliated university, no student paper was accepted for evaluation if it did not bear the infamous Honor Code. After each assignment, we dutifully folded our papers in half lengthwise and on the back scribbled out the code: "I swear that I have neither given, nor received, nor have I tolerated others' use of unauthorized aid on this paper." I reeled off those words just as I had recited Martin Luther's meanings to the commandments I had memorized as a child for catechism class—mechanically and certainly without contemplating the meaning of those meanings. I now realize that the syntax, rhythm, and meaning of the Honor Code closely resemble those of the seventh commandment ,"Thou shalt not steal." It's only now, over twenty years later, amidst theories and practices of collaboration, that I ask myself, "What is the meaning of the Honor Code? What were they afraid we would steal? And what constitutes "unauthorized" as opposed to "authorized" aid? Was the Code against collaboration in all forms, besides the obvious ones like copying exam answers from a classmate's paper. What indeed are these various forms of collaboration?

Lately when we hear the term "collaboration" (and as Andrea Lunsford pointed out last night, we hear it not only in education but in business and politics), it is unmodified, unclassified, naked. Perhaps the term has become overused, serves too many purposes, has too many referents. To clear up this fuzziness of meaning, what varieties of collaboration could we come up with if we brainstormed? How many modifying adjectives could we find? Well, authorized and unauthorized for a start, facilitative and directive, top-down/bottomup, equal/ unequal/, balanced/imbalanced/, symmetrical/asymmetrical; most pairs reflect different proportions of authority over text.

In fact, just as there exists no one individual writing process, but writing processes that vary by purpose, audience, task, and writer's personality, there is no one kind of collaboration, but collaborations, a diversity of collaborations if you will, to play with the conference theme, collaborations whose structures depend on the same features of rhetorical situation and interpersonal dynamics as the various writing processes do. These collaborations also depend on the collaborators' view of knowledge making, their epistomological stance, as Andrea Lunsford said last night. But is it possible to do a taxonomy on collaboration without creating reductive stereotypes or rigid dichotomies? Ede and Lunsford warn against such stereotypes when they distinguish between hierarchical and dialogic collaboration. Hierarchical is when one party may have more power, authority, and influence than the other, and dialogic is when both parties are usually more balanced in status, writing activity, and contributions toward the product. Hierarchical collaboration stresses efficiency in producing a product, whereas dialogic collaboration stresses the play of the process as much or more so than the product.

Relating these collaborations to writing centers, especially peer writing centers, how would we classify the peer tutoring relationship? Since "peer" implies more or less equal partners, would most peer sessions then be dialogic? Or, as John Trimbur tells us in the Writing Center Journal, is "peer tutoring" a contradiction in terms? Is there no such thing as a true peer, since no two individuals are alike and factors such as gender, race, class, and personality affect the dynamics of the relationship and therefore what happens in a tutoring session? To paraphrase George Orwell, is it that all peers are equal, but some peers are more equal than others? Since true peers are hard to find, does it follow, as Irene Clark (also in the WCJ) asserts, that true collaboration is hard to find? If peer tutoring, says Kenneth Bruffee, is a conversation, does one party dominate, control, or monopolize the conversation? If peer tutoring, as Ann Matsuhashi Feldman says, is a negotiation, is one party a better negotiator than the other? And who determines which rhetorical issues are negotiated? These are questions we should ask ourselves when we watch the videotapes and read the accompanying transcriptions. Because of the complicating demographic features, in addition to the contextual and textual features you find listed on your handout, Ede and Lunsford recommend ethnographic research as the only way to describe what is really happening in collaboration. I would like to think that this paper is directed toward an ethnography of collaboration. Studying videotapes and transcripts of them is a good way to do such research, as the folks from Michigan Tech showed us yesterday. Unfortunately, we only have time to view two brief excerpts from the openings of two tutoring sessions. The tapes are not as sharp and audible as they could be because they were originally done in 8 mm, copied to VHS, and then the edited excerpts were recopied. To make up for their being third-generation tapes, I transcribed the excerpts. Before I explain the background of the tapes, let's take a minute to look at the features on your handout that we could use to evaluate how balanced or imbalanced a collaborative session is.

Writer/Respondent Dynamics and Collaboration(s)

These are features of writer-respondent situations that may affect the balance of activities in collaborative work. Please add any other features you think of to the end of the list .

1. Age(s) of writer and respondent (same age, different ages—writer is

older, respondent is older).

2. Gender(s) of writer and respondent (same gender, different genders—writer is a male, respondent a female, writer is a female, respondent is male).
3. Ethnic background(s) of writer and respondent (same or different).
4. Language background(s) of writer and respondent (same or different—writer is non-native English speaker).
5. Personality characteristics of writer and respondent (extraverted, introverted, aggressive, passive).
6. Experience, training, and pedagogy of respondent (trained mainly as teachers or peer tutors, idea and story eliciters or text-correctors, empowerers or linguistic knowledge depositors).
7. Status of respondent compared to writer and whether he/she has power over the writer (a grade, a promotion).
8. Experience and attitude toward writing of writer (little or much school or home writing and reading experience, high or low writing apprehension).
9. Motivation of writer to come to session (voluntary, recommended, or "sent").
10. Length of time and frequency writer and respondent have worked with one another.
11. State of the text brought in as perceived by writer—work in progress, partial draft, first draft, completed paper.
12. State of the text brought in as perceived by respondent—(work in progress, partial draft, first draft, completed paper) and what respondent does with that text (reads it aloud, silently, sets it aside, has writer read it aloud).

13. How the conference goals and agenda are decided (by writer, respondent, by both, by writer's classroom teacher, by supervisor).
14. Writer's and respondent's knowledge of paper topic (balanced or imbalanced).
15. Level of discourse addressed (ideas, organization, phrasing, syntax, mechanics).
16. Length of contributions to discussion (# words and sentences each speaks).
17. Rhetorical functions of contributions to discussion (leading questions, open-ended questions, complaints, appeals).
18. Body language, positioning, and style of dialoguing (where participants are leaning, looking; where the text under focus is located; who is using a pen; who is reading the paper aloud or silently; a tentative, quiet voice vs. confident voice).
19. Add your own scale-tipping or scale-balancing factors here.

From my experience conferencing and watching tapes of writing conferences, these are the factors that most balance or tip the scales, usually in favor of the tutor but sometimes in favor of the tutee. You can add features to the list from your own experience and then share them during the discussion because I'm regarding these features as hypotheses or hunches. Using features # 11 and 12, I as the writer and you as the respondents should see this list and this paper as a work in progress.

Here are some ways these features operate. You might consider the tutor's writing experience, training, and pedagogy (#6) as very important for balance. Both of the sessions you'll see take place in a peer writing center, but in the first session, the peer is a high school teacher getting his M.A. in English; the tutor in the second session is a freshman with less experience as a writer and a respondent than tutor #1. You'll see, he acts just as burdened by writing as the tutee and thus expresses a certain peer solidarity.

Another potential scale-tipper, as we've discussed at this conference, is the motivation of the writer to seek tutoring (#9). If he is sent by his classroom teacher, he may at first see the tutor as a substitute or stand-in for the teacher, making for top-down collaboration at least at first, with him playing the submissive role of student, perhaps even wronged, alienated or humiliated student. Or depending on his personality (#5) he could also strongly direct the session toward the issues his teacher has identified, problems which he perceives, if solved, would improve his grade and status in the class.

Again, the state of the text brought in as both the writer and the respondent perceive it (#11 and 12) also determines the balance of activity. My hypothesis is that the more the writer sees her text as a work in progress, one of multiple drafts, the more likely there is to be a balance of activity in the session. Level of discourse addressed (#15) is also important. When the writers put aside the local issues of text, when physically they stop gazing at the tutee's paper, put down their pens and start gazing at each other and conversing about global, rhetorical issues as they do on the first tape, is the exchange more equal? You might predict that rhetorical tasks such as imagining effects of a passage on a reader, and whole discourse tasks such as generating ideas for a paper, which you'll see in the first session, would make for a more balanced exchange than more linguistic tasks such as wording passages or connecting one idea to the next, which you will see in the second session. But I'm not sure this is what happens. You can be the judges and evaluators.

Here is some background so that the excerpts will make sense. The videotapes are from the University of Illinois at Chicago, which serves a multiethnic, multi-racial population. Many people call it U.N.U., or United Nations University; in a composition class of 20 students, you could conceivably have up to 20 ethnic groups represented. Because of the diversity of the student body and the problems of racism in Chicago and elsewhere, one of the optional themes addressed in freshman composition through reading and writing assignments in an in-house reader is "Race and Ethnicity in Our Families and Lives." The writer on the tape, whom we'll call Joe, comes to the Writing Center in the process of working on his first draft of the first assignment in the sequence: what race and ethnicity mean to him and how his attitudes toward different races have developed. Obviously, relating to item #14 on your list, he knows more about this personal experience topic than his tutor, thus increasing the chances for equal engagement. He has brought in part of a draft—a story of being chased off the baseball field by a group of whites with baseball bats. He tells the tutor, the graduate student and high school teacher we'll call Henry, that besides telling the story of being chased, he wants to relate all the experiences that he, as a black man from the west side ghetto, has had with various ethnic groups and subgroups within those groups.

The tape shows them starting to negotiate what groups to focus on. The decision is eventually made to focus only on the Caucasian group and on its racist and tolerant sub-groups. In addition, they decide that Joe will trace the development of his attitudes toward whites from his father's experiences in the segregated South, through Joe's experience in the ghetto and in the army, to moving to an all-white neighborhood and getting chased. From viewing the beginning of the negotiations, how do you think these decisions to focus are made—jointly or top-down? How is the course of the session determined? How is this paper shaped? Is Henry a facilitative collaborator or a directive one? In terms of the control that Andrea Lunsford talked about last night, is

Henry too controlling?

Transcriptions of #1: Joe (tutee) and Henry (tutor)

(Henry has just silently read Joe's partial draft, a story of a racial incident in which he was chased off the baseball field by a group of white boys with baseball bats. Then he clarifies with Joe what the purpose of the assignment was—to show how your attitudes towards race and ethnicity were shaped.)

H: As you point out, one of the things you want to use is the personal example, as far as leading in to your point and idea. What I thought was really interesting was when you get to this part right here, dealing with the experience of the street here. The thing you have to, what do you think you have to keep in mind as far as the focus of the paper? The focus becomes what? What's the focus of the paper as we go back to what the topic is about here?

J: The focus is basically race and ethnicity.

H: So your position, your attitudes that you have towards that right? What do you think could possibly happen here as you begin to use the example? What could the paper become too much of is what I'm trying to.

J: It could become um too much of a story.

H: Right, right. You see I think what maybe would help here, what maybe is not a bad idea is to keep the example and use it because I think you really develop and what you're doing is that you're hitting it home as far as how it is that this example becomes maybe all-encompassing of how it shapes your views and your ideas as far as your attitude towards a particular race. Now is your attitude shaped let's say toward the white race, for example? Is that what it's going to center on?

J: Basically it's going to center, but I want to hit all of them a little bit. Like at my job, you know, there's a thing where the Mexicans they think they're more than you and they display this attitude and they put up their little signs that says "Mexicans rule niggers," you know, it's pretty strong stuff you know. I wanted to touch a little of that and I wanted to touch a little of the Jews because there's some Jews that come on my job, but maybe I'm going too deep with it though.

H: Well, what do you think? First, what is the scope of the paper? Like how long is it supposed to be?

J: Right, she says 3 pages, but, you know, some people have written four, you know.

H: You see, the thing you have to keep in mind, too, if you're working within a limitation, you know, is that you don't have to touch on every culture. So I think you what you need to look at is to set up a scheme or whatever of what culture you would want to look at as far as how your attitude or your opinions of that culture have been shaped or how they have been brought about or developed or what have you and I think one of the things you maybe want to start out with is the idea of what specifically will you look at and I think that what maybe that does is then give the paper some focus.

J: Right.

H: So that if we were to start, let's leave the example for a moment, we'll come back to that. What particular groups would you want to start, what right away, the first group you'd want to deal as far as your attitude toward that group has been shaped or formed?

J: The white group.

H: O.K. so first the white race, the white group, and then what would be the next group then?

J: After the white group I would want to go to um I'm in between on the Mexicans and the uh Jews, but I'd like to talk about the white culture groups first.

H: O.K., well I think what you're doing is at least it's giving you a rough shape, as far as what specifically to concentrate on. I think what you may run into a problem here is not the lack of information, you may have a lot of information. What you really gotta do is really center in on so you know let's do this for a second. What is the main idea you'd want to work with as far as the let's say the white group alone.

J: I want to work with how certain areas uh the people just take the attitude of the past, you know, but I don't want to justify the position for all of them. I don't want to segregate them. There's some that, you know, I don't want to be overdoing it like saying its all. . . .

H: Then it becomes a stereotype and that's what you want to avoid.

J: From here now I was going to go and I have another idea too. I was going to go to how after this incident took place, I slowly watched the neighborhood beginning to deteriorate as more blacks moved in and whites moving out and before long there was no more of this type of stuff because there was no more racial conflict. I think it's interesting because these people moved out, and it's like saying we don't want any part of this so strongly like that, we're gonna move. I think that says something.

H: You know what, I'll tell you what. While we're talking why don't you just take some notes, too. As you run into ideas what happens there is at least get the rough draft down on paper and if we don't get a rough draft completely done at least you have an outline of something to work with, from there.

In the second tape we've got Joe, the same writer a week later. But is he indeed the same writer? In the week that transpired, he has gotten back a paper from his composition teacher with comments that he perceives disparage his writing and maybe even himself and possibly his own ethnicity. Later on in the 1 1/2-hour session, he shows these comments to the tutor, the freshman we'll call Eddy. These comments have made him almost obsessive about the precision of his phrasing and his transitions. The comments also make him speculate that freshman composition may be included as one of his discrimination experiences. As you'll hear, he talks about "transitting" a lot; he has cleverly derived the verb ""transit" from the noun "transition." He perceives that "transitting" from one idea to the next is one of his major problems. This transitting problem is, however, overshadowed by the rhetorical problem of makin his paper compelling to himself and to an audience.

It is interesting that the teacher doesn't seem to figure into this larger personal goal. The tutor Eddy, much more Joe's peer than Henry, for reasons we can discuss (they are both freshman for one thing) makes no attempt to change Joe's goals for the paper and works with the text that Joe brings in. The theme of this paper again is "Ethnicity," but this assignment required Joe to interview someone from another culture about his/her experience with ethnicity and prejudice. Joe has chosen a female Mexican student who, much to his surprise and dismay, claims not to have experienced blatant discrimination by whites, but she does relate some subtle forms of racism she has felt. Joe is having difficulty telling her story on paper for many reasons. First, her experiences are so different than his that he doesn't quite believe them. He's also having the same problems of any journalist who writes up oral histories. Whose words should he use, hers or his? He says he wants to word the story to make it compelling, but his interviewee in his mind has failed to provide him with the kind of compelling material that he had for his first essay, so he feels he has to compensate through more powerful phrasing. He also wants to avoid the teacher's red pen. This writer/respondent twosome has doubled to include the teacher and the paper's subject, both of whom influence the session, lurking in the background influencing the paper although physically they are not present. You see the beginning of this session in which Joe reads his paper to Eddy and they decide to keep the text brought in (#12 on your list) and work on phrasing, using more interpretation of the interviewee's words and fewer direct quotes from her to make the story, in Joe's words, more compelling.

In terms of number of sentences (#16) in the entire session, Eddy says very little compared to Henry, the first tutor, even when Joe asks his opinion.

Look at the balance of dialogue on your transcription. Eddy may not be comfortable in the role that you see Joe beginning to cast him in as he reads the paper—co-worder, phrasing-supervisor, sort of a linguistic super-ego. As you'll see, he does fidgit a lot. When you watch this excerpt, ask yourself, "Is the collaboration in wording between Joe and Eddy more equal compared to the collaboration in idea-generation between Joe and Henry? Which tape do you think shows more balanced, dialogic collaboration: #l (Joe and Henry) or #2 (Joe and Eddy)? Which session do you think is more productive? Which do you think makes for a better paper? Which do you think is more satisfying to Joe?

Transcript of #2: Joe (same tutee) and Eddy (tutor)

E: (After Joe has explained the interview assignment to him) How do you feel for, how do you feel with this? What did you want to do this it? Did you want to see about organization or something?

J: I wanted to make this more compelling actually, but the things that she told me they're kinda subtle. It's just not, it's not really compelling, you know.

E: Oh, really.

J: Yeah, but I read a story by Alice Walker. She told a story that wasn't compelling either, yet there it is in the book.

E: It's published right. Just because it's published doesn't mean it's better.

J: Right you know. So I mean, it isn't as interesting as others, you know yet she still have some you know. . . .

E: You just deal, deal with what you have. You couldn't get her to get into anything personal, huh?

J: I tried, but she insists that her life has been smooth sailin'. Maybe it has.

E: Good then, right? O.K. let's see what you have so far.

J: All right. These two pages.

E: Do you want to read it to me?

J: Sure, O.K. (Reads) R.M. is a nineteen year old female, native of Mexico, but was raised in the United States. She is presently a student at UIC. [I should have put a period there I guess.]

E: Yeah.

J: [This is gonna work, this is supposed to be my introduction.]

E: O.K.

J: (Continues reading) In an interview she tells me about some of the experiences she has had regarding her race and ethnic background. As a child, R was unaware of issues surrounding her race and ethnic background. [I caught myself trying to transit through it here from this paragraph to the next]

E: What, to. . . .

J: [To transit from this paragraph to the next one. My teacher was saying I don't transit very well.]

E: O.K. Maybe we could work on that later on.

J: (Resumes reading, repeats previous sentence) As a child R was unaware of issues surrounding her race and ethnic background. She played with children on all cultures. Looking back, she recalls an incident that took place when she was about the age of ten. It was 1974. I was living in the vicinity of ? and St. Louis in the Chicago area. [This is what was going to be here at the end here.] The next door neighbor, Mrs. Bardsley, a white lady, called the police to have some Mexican children removed from her porch. She didn't even ask them to leave. She just called the police. "I am not sure this incident took place because of race or not. The neighborhood eventually changed from being [now this is another part] predominantly white to being an all Spanish neighborhood." [Now I iust can't, I gotta do something with this. It's so boring.] (Resumes reading). According to Rosa, Hispanic neighborhoods are pretty much closed to outsiders. [Now here I go again, I caught myself trying to relate, trying to transit and relate to this last bit of information in the previous paragraph.] According to Rosa, Hispanic neighborhoods are pretty much closed to outsiders. That is, anyone other than an Hispanic. The family values are mainly traditional and usually enforced by their parents. I have two cousins [I want to make it where she's talking.] that are married; one of them is married to a Puerto Rican and the other to an Italian and so, she admits, the Puerto Rican gets treated better than the Italian because of his Spanish roots. O.K.

E: O.K. Did she actually say all this?

J: Yeah.

E: Those are direct quotes right?

J: You see it's the way I gotta word it, I guess it makes it a little bit kinda like boring.

E: O.K.

J: (Resumes reading) Rosa says she has lots of experience with different cultures. [There I go again with this trying to transit. You see that.]

E: I think it worked pretty well here though you start with talk about Hispanic neighborhoods and then maybe, we'll fix this because you want to change this up here, too, right?

J: Rosa says she has lots of experience with different cultures and being of Spanish roots hasn't been a hindrance. "I work with many white people and I get treated as good as the next person. My experience with this predominant culture of white people has been great. I personally have never experienced any discrimination from them, nor have I ever been the scapegoat for a bunch of racial jokes."

E: Pretty good life.

J: I'm telling you, I mean . . . .

E: Does she get out?

J: Well, she did, you know she gets out, but uh I guess girls are pretty right? I should have picked a guy, huh?

E: I think you, maybe a gang member or something.

J: (Reading again) Of course, of course I have had this same experience of course. [O.K. this is another part.] Of course, I have had this same experience with all the various cultures in this society. Now what's generally being said here is that she's been treated fairly by all races in this country.

E: O.K. Right.

J: The way I got it wrote, worded, I guess . . . .

E: Maybe you don't need "all the" with "the various." We can go over this after. I just want to hear what this paper's about.

J: (Resumes reading) Of course, I have had this experience with all the cultures of this society. It is unfortunate that everyone hasn't been able to have the same type of experience that I have had. [Now I did that because of this transit thing again. There I go again.]

E: Excuse me, is this the end quote, right?

J: O.K. I just didn't do anything with it.

E: No problem.

J: (Resumes reading) She tells of an unfortunate incident that took place directly involving one of her best friends. My best friend is a Mexican girl and she is very smart. Her and I were (?) where she was telling jokes with another girl where this white guy said, "Hey, will you be quiet?" So my friend said, "Sure" but this white girl who was sitting close by made the comment 'They can't help it. It's in their culture."'

J: So this is interesting right, but it's just so subtle. I gotta word it better. (Resumes reading) Rosa admits people with such low mentalities causes me to develop bad attitudes [Now I don't know what goes here actually, but I think it's a colon or something; whatever she makes this statement or I should have said maybe "she says" you know.] (Reading) People with such low mentalities causes me to develop bad attitudes.

E: O.K. Yeah.

J: Lots of people get ridiculed by me because I sometimes assume they mean something bad when I could not have been further from the truth. It's just the ways she said it, you know and I can't say it like that on paper, I know. To boring.

E: O.K.

J: [So now this right here is just something I put there out of tiredness.]

E: Were you up until 2:00 last night?

J: Yeah.

E: Were you really? I was up that late too.

J: Were you?

E: I was doing some, I was writing.

J: Can we do anything with this?

E: It seems you have maybe a problem with quotes.

J: Quoting it exactly, it's so simple, you really can't make it compelling, you know. I want it compelling.

E: Maybe you can just interpret her quotes instead of using the gut quotes.

Discussion

Which is more truly collaborative and why? Which features from the list are operating to influence your evaluation?

Tutoring Writing From the Psychiatrist's Couch

Presenters: Elizabeth A. Spaeth, Writing Lab Director
Tutors: Dawn Currier, Suzanne Otte
Former Tutor: Catherine Latterell
College of St. Benedict

Our panel is entitled "Tutoring Writing From the Psychiatrist's Couch." The subject occurred to us after having several tutoring sessions last year in which our clients broke down crying or became so emotional about their subjects that it overpowered their ability to think clearly enough to write. We decided that we should give some attention to situations like these. What do we do, we wondered, when in the act of writing a person realizes the intensity or magnitude of a personal problem and is overwhelmed by it? Is there anything we can do as tutors to help? What kind of attention can we give to a student in distress? How do we address the student's paper under such circumstances?

Our presentation will take the following form:

1. I will briefly explain what I see as the variables at work in a piece of writing. I will point out why I think some combinations of these variables can cause serious problems for some students.
2. The tutors will give some examples of such problems and discuss them with you.
3. We'll conclude with open discussion for a wider understanding of what we can do when we find ourselves confronted with such situations.

I would like to begin by clarifying several variables at work in any piece of writing and then show how certain combinations of these variables can be the spark for trouble.

The first area where two of these variables occur is in the notion of what a college education is. The point of education, I think, is to expand the individual. There is a body of knowledge (the subject matter of a discipline) teachers would like students to learn, but learn to understand in a way so that they are able to make connections between their own experiences and those of their intellectual ancestors. What happens in the classroom must be connected to life. What is to be learned must make sense. Students are asked to reflect, often to search with the eye of the mind into the self and with introspection to understand themselves or to bring meaning from their own experiences in order to render a text meaningful. Some of this introspection requires self-disclosure. But it is an important part of learning to probe beyond what is easily accessible, even to be disturbed or jarred out of one's complacency in order to be able to see. The very word "educate" means to lead out.

If, therefore, the subject matter to be learned is one variable in what education means, the second is that part of each individual student which brings the knowledge to life—her experiences, thoughts, insights. Each student's own personal background has prepared her for a special way of making the material at hand her own. It is this individual, personal approach that makes learning successful. It is the personal involvement plus the knowledge to be learned that produces education.

The second area that helps us to define this problem is what I call a student's disposition toward writing, that is, the measure of confidence a student has in his own ability to write. Some students who come looking for help with their writing already possess it; the confidence I speak of is the kind that shores up a person's venture into the struggle to find words to fit an idea. It is a confidence that says:

> Here are my thoughts; I've given my best to them. I will defend them because I have considered and weighed their worthiness—yet if I see a weakness in them, something I haven't anticipated, I will reconsider. My sense of myself will not be shaken in such revision for my self-worth is not at stake in a re-evaluation of my ideas. I am free to rethink this idea and rewrite.

Sadly enough, though, students like these are not in the majority of those who come through our doors. Rather, isn't this following description more the norm, more descriptive of what many students think and some make bold to say: "My writing is me and if you criticize my writing, you're finding fault with me. I have put all of me into this piece, it's not much, but it's all I am. If you pick it apart, I will be close to devastated."

The defenses such students put up to help ward off an expected attack on their writing go something like this:

1. My writing has never been very good.
2. I can't write.
3. This really isn't a very good idea and I knew it wouldn't stand up very well.
4. I don't have time to make this any better.
5. I don't care anyway.
6. Or just moods greet the tutor: silence, nervous laughter, anger, helplessness.

I think the sense of self-worth a student has is a very important variable as we try to understand this problem.

And the third area I'd like to mention resides in the very nature of composition. It is a variable all by itself, an extremely important one because it is what the act of writing is—an act of discovery. We write in order to know what we think. Our own words teach us something we didn't already know or only knew slightly. We discover what we mean, we gain insights into our own thoughts, motives, intentions, desires, things we have done, and things we have had done to us. I believe we have all experience this happening as we write. We know but writing makes us realize, makes us know in a new way.

Now what happens when we take certain combinations of these variables and put them together? Take an assignment that steps outside of the subject matter and asks from the student for an exploration of self. Many times assignments of this kind come in the guise of writing about an experience that has strongly affected one. The assignment asks for a person search. Many students are able to deal with such an assignment—they are mature enough to be able to distance themselves from any harmful effects in an experience they have had or, as we say, they have "worked through" the experience. Others know how to steer clear of emotional trouble spots by writing superficially to avoid confrontation with self. Yet a number of students uncover great difficulty in writing about such topics.

The student must write about self; yet if one's sense of self is weak in its perception of its worth, then in the act of writing realizations can be reached which may overwhelm the student. The connection between that act of discovery that writing can invite, and what happens to a student who isn't prepared to deal with what her writing has disclosed, seems to me to be at the heart of this problem.Our writing center witnessed too many students being asked to write about grave problems.

The writing lab tutors then gave some examples of situations where this trouble occurred and a discussion with the audience took place. One student was a good writer, but when writing about the death of her younger sister, her writing fell apart and the teacher, with many misgivings, gave her a C on the paper. Is the "C," we asked, then to be construed as an evaluation of the worth of her experience? One Writing Lab director, when helping a student having difficulty finding something to write about for a personal experience paper, had suggested to her, "Well, I tried to commit suicide three times; would that be something to write about?" As we discussed the dilemma, a consensus seemed to form, seeing such direct personal assignments as the culprit. Textbooks include segments on personal writing, and authors, who have had success in their own lives with such writing, seem to think it is the wise thing for everyone to do. However, unless writing labs and composition teachers have training in dealing with the psychological repercussions of what this kind of writing can uncover, it is best we leave such assignments alone. We all agreed.

Establishing A High School Writing Lab

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In recent years, more and more high schools have become interested in establishing writing labs or writing centers. These labs take many different forms, from computer-centered to tutoring-centered; from English department service programs to across-the-curriculum programs; from peer tutor staffs to professional staff; and several combinations of the above. As funds become available or school boards recognize the need for such services, teachers find themselves in need of guidelines for setting up writing centers. As a co-director of a high school writing lab that has been in operation since 1983, I would like to offer some suggestions.

Assuming the funding has been provided, the first step is to write a philosophy on which all subsequent decisions will be based. If the staff has been selected, they might write the philosophy, but a better plan would be for the teachers who are going to be served by the writing center to meet and discuss what they want a writing center to do. With this information in hand, the staff might then do the actual composing of the philosophy. At Hazelwood West, where I teach, our philosophy is as follows: We believe all students have something to say and that they can and will say it in writing if they have the confidence of knowing that they can get help if and when they need it. Since we wrote that statement originally, we have informally added a corollary: Computers often help students improve their writing because they make revising so easy.

All decisions regarding staffing, purchasing equipment and supplies, providing time for teachers and students to use the lab, and deciding what activities to pursue in the lab are based on this philosophy. Without some underlying principles, it becomes very easy to turn a writing lab into a computer lab, since most high school writing labs have computers. The difference, as I see it, concerns what activities students are engaged in when they come to the lab. More about that later.

Once a philosophy is agreed upon, the location in the school must be decided on. Many schools have a very limited choice, but if at all possible, the writing center should be close to the English department classrooms and/or the library. Ours was not close to either when we first opened our lab, but when we outgrew the rooms first assigned to us, the principal approved the partitioning of our library, which is across the hall from the majority of our English classrooms. Thus our lab is easily accessible from both, with little chance of students wandering off to other areas when they come to the lab. Because of the easy access, students can come and go to the library without hall passes, a blessing—especially for students working on research papers.

Space and equipment go hand-in-hand when planning a writing lab. If space permits and your philosophy includes both tutoring and wordprocessing activities, then you have to think about how many computers you need and whether or not you have space for them. If you don't have much space, then you must consider how you can accomplish the most with the space you have. At Hazelwood West, we have two large rooms, one of which is used primarily to tutor and to house resources (software, textbooks, books on student writing, and a professional library for teachers—approximately 100 books on teaching writing). The other room has twenty-five computers (presently Apple IIe's which will be replaced in the next year or two by Macintoshes) and one Macintosh SE. Students come to the lab individually or with their classes to do wordprocessing. But for our first two years, we had one, then two, then six computers, and we coped by having students work in pairs or do collaborative writing. One big advantage of having enough computers for a whole class to work at the same time is that the teachers can come with their classes. Then the staff doesn't have to wonder whether they are assisting in the areas the teachers want, and the classroom teacher is another person available to help the students with individual problems.

Staffing is another major concern in establishing a writing lab. Some schools use peer tutors only, under the supervision and training of a professional staff member. Others have professional staff with peer tutors as assistants. Still others have professional staff only. I know some wordprocessing labs that have no staff, but I don't consider them *writing* labs. In our school, we have a staff composed of two English teachers who each work half a day in the lab and teach two classes. We also have a teacher assistant who is in the lab all day. The assistant keeps records and assists students and teachers with computer use and writing problems. I have observed labs that have a different English teacher each hour, some that have only an assistant all day, some have no assistant but a teacher each hour—there are many ways to staff a lab. The one essential, from my point of view, is to have an English teacher available who knows and believes in the writing process. Another advantage of having an English teacher in the lab is that she/he will be familiar with the writing curriculum of the school.

Recordkeeping is also a very important function of the lab staff. Before the lab opens, plans should be made and forms designed for efficient recordkeeping. If computers are available, consideration should be given to purchasing a data base program. We have student information forms, daily logs for each student, sign-up sheets for teachers, and a daily sign-in sheet for students. With our data base, we can compile at the end of each semester an extensive report on student use, teacher use, usage by grade level, usage by classes, and much additional information. Such records may be essential to justify the continuation of the lab, but even if they are not, the information is useful to the staff.

In most high school writing labs I am familiar with, the staff is engaged in a variety of activities. Naturally, students work on writing assignments made in English classes, but in most labs, students also come from classes in all disciplines to seek help with their writing, or to write their papers on computers, or both. At Hazelwood West, the staff also assists classroom teachers in planning writing assignments; sponsors a writing club, which publishes a literary magazine and sponsors a writing contest within the school; helps students write job applications and resumes; provides assistance to students who need to write college and/or scholarship applications; and serves as a clearinghouse for writing contests. The assistance we provide includes tutoring and the technical aspects of using wordprocesing programs and other software we have available.

Selecting software is another job that must be done at the beginning, if the lab has computers. From our experience, we advise people to buy as little software as possible at the start, because new and better is constantly becoming available and because much that is sold under the heading of "writing" really turns out to be practice exercises. The programs we find students and teachers use most frequently include wordprocessing programs (buy one that won't take newcomers long to learn but which is sophisticated enough to meet the requirements of high school writing), programs that will produce newspapers, certificate programs, and graphics programs. We also have a crossword puzzle program and a story-writing program. To meet the needs of teachers and students, taking a survey of needs before spending money might be helpful.

Like any new endeavor, there is no way to anticipate and prepare for all problems that may develop. Most of what you need to know, you will find out as the need arises. But it is a help to be prepared for staffing, recordkeeping, and selecting of resources. It is especially helpful to have a philosophy that guides all decisions concerning a high school writing lab.

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